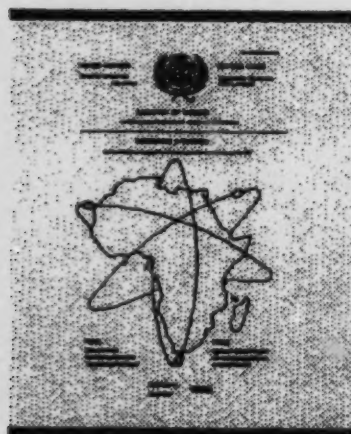


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**UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC COMMISSION
FOR AFRICA**



PADIS

**PAN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT
INFORMATION SYSTEM**

**FOURTH MEETING OF THE REGIONAL
TECHNICAL COMMITTEE FOR PADIS**

REPORT AND DOCUMENTATION

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia



UNITED NATIONS

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL



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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

Fourth Meeting of the
Regional Technical Committee
for PADIS

Addis Ababa
23-25 March 1989

REPORT

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11. Provisional Agenda (ECA/PADIS/RTC/IV/Rev.2)

I. ORGANIZATION AND ATTENDANCE

1. The fourth meeting of the Regional Technical Committee for the Pan African Documentation and Information System (PADIS) took place at the Headquarters of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) in Addis Ababa from 23-25 March 1989. The meeting was opened by the Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Secretary of the ECA Prof. Adebayo Adedeji.

2. The meeting was attended by the following members of the Committee: Algeria, Ethiopia, Niger, Zaire and Zambia. Organizational members in attendance were: the Organization of African Unity, the United Nations Educational and Scientific Organization (Unesco) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

II. OPENING

Opening of the Meeting (agenda item 1)

3. In opening the meeting, Prof. Adedeji, who serves as Chairman of the Committee, noted that PADIS was in its tenth year of operation, which marked an appropriate time to examine PADIS' accomplishments and recommend guidelines for its future development. He congratulated PADIS on its high rate of programme implementation and the variety of the activities it had undertaken over the past two years: these had to be measured, however, by the extent to which they led to attainment of the project's objectives and had impact on the way in which information was managed and utilized by member States. He stressed his concern to solidify PADIS' financial situation, with regard to both extra-budgetary funding as well as United Nations regular budget support. In this area he pointed out that ECA's programme budget submission for 1990-1991 included a request for regular budget support for some PADIS professional posts; this support, he said, would increase under the Medium-Term Plan for 1992-1997. To ensure it, the support of member States was needed throughout the approval process that culminated with the General Assembly.

Adoption of agenda (agenda item 2)

4. The following agenda was adopted, as per document ECA/PADIS/RTC/IV/1/Rev.2:

1. Opening of the meeting
2. Adoption of agenda
3. Matters arising from ECA Meetings
4. Progress report on PADIS activities since the Third meeting of the Regional Technical Committee

5. Report on a Survey of User Needs
6. Report of the Second meeting of the Standing Committee on Harmonization and Standardization of Documentation and Information Systems at ECA-sponsored Regional and Subregional Institutions
7. Padis Work Programme and Budget, 1990-1991
8. Any other business
9. Adoption of the report
10. Closure

III. GENERAL DEBATE

Matters arising from ECA Meetings (agenda item 3)

5. The secretariat introduced documents ECA/PADIS/RTC/IV/2 and ECA/PADIS/RTC/IV/2/Add.1 detailing a number of meetings relevant to the PADIS work programme which had been held since the third meeting of the Regional Technical Committee for PADIS (RTC) (Addis Ababa, April 1987). These included, among others, the eighth and ninth meetings of the Technical Preparatory Committee of the Whole, the thirteenth and fourteenth meetings of the ECA Conference of Ministers, the Fifth Session of the Joint Conference of African Planners, Statisticians and Demographers, the eighth meeting of Chiefs of ECA-sponsored Regional and Subregional Institutions, and meetings of the legislative organs of the Gisenyi, Lusaka, Niamey, Tangiers and Yaounde-based MULPOCs as well as the Technical Consultative Meeting of Directors of Library and Information Schools in Africa. Clarification was requested on the number of countries which had signed the UNDP/Regional Bureau for Arab States and European Programmes project document RAB/88/012: Participation of North African countries in PADIS. It was noted that in addition to Morocco and Somalia which had already signed the document, signatures were expected shortly from three additional countries. The meeting took note of the reports.

Progress report on PADIS activities since the Third meeting of the Regional Technical Committee (agenda item 4)

6. The secretariat presented document ECA/PADIS/RTC/IV/3/Rev.1 on the implementation of the PADIS project since its third meeting which included information on the status of national, subregional and institutional participating centres; user services; training; advisory services and infrastructure building at the PADIS Central

Coordinating Office. In the debate on this item, explanations were requested regarding the concentration of training programmes and advisory services in a limited number of member States. The Secretariat stated that advisory services were delivered upon request of member States; the diversity of the nature of the services delivered was based on the diversity of needs for which PADIS assistance had been requested. Training programmes, on the other hand, had benefitted a comparatively larger number of countries; preference was given here to countries which had designated their national participating centres. The extent of both advisory services and training programmes were limited by availability of resources.

7. Explanation was also sought on the reason for member State participation being lower than expected. The Secretariat described the measures it had taken to boost participation by member States. As a result, the number of countries that had designated their centres had more than doubled in the period under review, and the number reached amounted to more than half of the countries of the region. Regarding the low level of participation, the Chair¹ suggested that this might be alleviated by PADIS' increasing its marketing efforts in this regard.

8. Observations were made on the limited personnel resources available to PADIS in relation to the magnitude of its mandates for delivery of services to member States and on the need to co-ordinate PADIS activities' with other regional and international programmes underway in the region. The Secretariat detailed measures being taken to increase its personnel resources as well as the nature of ungoing co-ordination in this regard. UNESCO detailed recent and on-going co-operative ventures between PADIS and its General Programme of Information (PGI). On its part, the Secretariat expressed satisfaction with the current level of co-operation between the two organizations and gave details of activities that were being planned.

Report on a Survey of User Needs (agenda item 5)

9. The Secretariat presented document ECA/PADIS/RTC/IV/4 which detailed a study undertaken by PADIS in 1988 on user needs for development information in government offices, research institutions and information centres in three English-speaking countries of the region in order to find out what kind of development information was needed, in what formats and at which stages of the development process. In the ensuing discussion it

¹ In the absence of the designated Chairman, the representative of Zambia was designated to chair the meeting.

was pointed out that the study underlined the need for PADIS to undertake seriously a marketing strategy to make its products and services well-known in the region. The information PADIS had available was needed by its target clientele, but for the most part, they were unaware of its existence or of how to access it. It was also noted that utilization of official channels of communication frequently impeded PADIS' reaching its desired audience; efforts should be made to reach users by the most direct means possible.

10. A question was raised about whether the study's findings with regard to the demand for full-length, technical documents would produce different results if the study were replicated in other countries of the region. It was observed that the report pointed out the need for PADIS to address two target groups at the national level simultaneously: both development planners and information professionals needed to be reached. The secretariat informed the Committee that following the study attempts were being made to better target recipients of its different products and services, as well as to keep in touch with those who had participated in the survey. PADIS was also developing several full-text data bases, in response to one of the needs outlined in the study.

Report of the Second meeting of the Standing Committee on Harmonization and Standardization of Documentation and Information Systems at ECA-sponsored Regional and Subregional Institutions (agenda item 6)

11. The secretariat introduced document ECA/PADIS/RTC/IV/5 which recounted the recommendations and discussions that had taken place at the first meeting of the Standing Committee, including the adoption of its terms of reference, modalities for participation in the system and the extension of membership on the Committee to all African institutions interested in the subject; the second meeting of the Standing Committee had reviewed the work accomplished in the above areas and made resolutions for its continuation. In debate on this item, the need was raised to open membership to all African institutions to avoid duplication of efforts in this area. The wish was also expressed to have documents of the Standing Committee available in the three official working languages of the region: English, French and Arabic. The Secretariat stated that it would continue its efforts to increase membership of the Standing Committee. Regarding translations, there had been financial constraints in this area, but the approval of the project for participation of North African countries in PADIS would help to permit translations into Arabic of the requested documents.

PADIS Work Programme and Budget, 1990-1991 (agenda item 7)

12. The secretariat introduced document ECA/PADIS/RTC/IV/6/Rev.1 relating to this item. PADIS' work programme under the proposed United Nations programme budget for 1990-1991 was detailed, as well as the activities to be undertaken to implement extra-budgetary projects. In reply to a question regarding the funding of the West African Documentation and Information System (WADIS), the meeting was informed that the computer equipment as well as a documentalist to service the system were already in place; WADIS was expected to become operational on 1 April 1989. In response to resolution 7 from the 1989 meeting of the Council of Ministers of the Niamey-based MULPOC, a project document was being prepared to seek additional funding for WADIS. Questions were raised about PADIS' fellowship programme, with the view expressed that fellowships were too costly a use of scarce resources in terms of the benefit derived. It was explained that PADIS fellowship funds were limited in number; those few available went for short-term in-service and attachment training for staff of PADIS' national and institutional participating centres.

13. Questions were raised about the study tour to the Soviet Union: the Secretariat informed the Committee that it would provide substantive and administrative support for the project, but all costs would be met by the Government of the USSR. Priority for participation on the study tour would be given to heads of PADIS national participating centres and members of the RTC. In the context of the project for the Organization for the Management and Development of Kagera River Basin (RAF/88/125), UNDP raised the matter of PADIS' generating income to support its activities in the future when extra-budgetary sources of funding might not be available; it was suggested that PADIS sell its products and services at profit-making levels. While the Secretariat pointed out the efforts it had made to generate income, several members of the Committee noted that it would be very difficult for an information system established on the principle of serving the public good to become self-sufficient, if not profit-making. Extra-budgetary sources of funding would continue to be needed.

14. There was general concern for strengthening the human resource base for PADIS operations, in view of what members regarded as PADIS high level of performance since the establishment of the Committee and its service to African member States, to secure its continuation and limit dependency on extra-budgetary funding. It was urged that the Committee could seek support for PADIS from their Governments, detailed explanations were requested on the nature and level of funding requested from the United Nations

regular budget for 1990-1991, as well as on the situation with regard to UNDP funding in 1991 for professional-level PADIS project posts. That was also connected, it was noted, with the more general need for PADIS to undertake marketing efforts on its own behalf. The Secretariat detailed the situation of funding for posts from UNDP through 1990 as well as those requested from the United Nations budget for the forthcoming biennium. The Committee decided to draft a resolution to be presented to the Conference of Ministers: (a) seeking member State support for the PADIS submission in the 1990-1991 programme budget; (b) urging member States to make voluntary contributions to PADIS; and (c) urging donors to continue their support to the project.

Any Other Business (agenda item 8)

15. The representative of Zaire informed the meeting that the Government of Zaire had signed the agreement to host the headquarters of the Central African Documentation and Information System (CADIS) to be based in Kinshasa. In this regard an expert would be visiting ECA shortly to work out the modalities for its operations. Gratitude was expressed to Zaire for its action.

16. The representative of Algeria announced that his Government had signed project document RAB/88/012 submitted to the United Nations Development Programme through its Regional Bureau for Arab States and European Programmes to finance the participation of North African countries in PADIS. The meeting expressed its thanks to the four countries that had signed the document, which would now bring the project into operation: Algeria, Djibouti, Morocco and Somalia.

17. The secretariat presented for the consideration of the Committee a change in the name for PADIS from the Pan African Documentation and Information System to the Pan African **Development** Information System, in order to more accurately reflect the activities it was undertaking. Its acronym, PADIS, of course, would remain the same. It was explained that the change in name better expressed PADIS' mandate to cover the whole spectrum of development information, regardless of its type. The meeting approved the change.

Adoption of the report (agenda item 9)

18. The report of the meeting (ECA/PADIS/RTC/IV/7) was adopted, as amended. A resolution entitled "Strengthening development information systems in Africa, which appears in section V of this report, was adopted as well for submission to the Conference of Ministers through the Technical Preparatory Committee of the Whole (TEPCOW).

IV. CLOSING

Closure (agenda item 10)

19. The Chairman thanked all present at the meeting for their participation; he noted especially the attendance of member States of the Committee and expressed gratitude to the organizational members as well for their efforts on behalf of the success of the meeting.

V. RESOLUTION

Strengthening development information systems in Africa

The Conference of Ministers,

Recalling its resolution 498 (XIX) of 26 May 1984 on the Pan African Documentation and Information System in Africa;

Recalling also its resolution 600 (XXII) of 24 April 1987 on information systems development in Africa;

Recognizing the need to promote the increased flow and improved reliability and compatibility of information and data for development planning and decision-making in the member States of the Commission in order to fully establish and improve regional capabilities in the management of information as a resource for development;

Cognizant of the rapid pace at which information technologies are evolving and the slow rate at which they are being introduced in the African region;

Further cognizant of the need for periodic evaluation of the activities of PADIS with a view to ensuring always their relevance, effectiveness and impact;

Noting with satisfaction the high rate of implementation of the PADIS programme and the high quality of the outputs delivered during the period 1987-89;

Recognizing the need to put PADIS on a firm financial footing and to ensure its sustainability;

Noting with concern attempts made at the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly at its forty-third session to reduce the scope of PADIS and therefore jeopardize the collective efforts of African countries to promote the effective collection and dissemination of information for development; and bearing in mind the adverse consequences of such a reduction on the collection, analysis, storage and dissemination of development information in an integrated manner in Africa;

Commending the position successfully taken at that forum by member States of the African group to defend the PADIS programme;

Noting with appreciation the measures currently being taken by the Executive Secretary to put PADIS on regular budgetary support basis;

Noting with satisfaction the increasingly broad scope of the activities of PADIS in support of development information in Africa;

1. Endorses: (i) the Report of the Fourth Meeting of the Regional Technical Committee for PADIS, including its recommendations; (ii) the proposed PADIS work programme for the period 1990-91; and (iii) the change in name of PADIS from the Pan African Documentation and Information System to the Pan African Development Information System;

2. Commends the Governments of Zambia and Zaire for the support they are extending to PADIS and particularly towards the establishment of the East and Southern African Documentation and Information System (ESADIS) in Lusaka and the Central African Documentation and Information System (CADIS) in Kinshasa;

3. Commends also the Governments of Algeria, Djibouti, Morocco and Somalia for signing UNDP project document RAB/88/012 which makes possible the participation of North African countries in PADIS;

4. Calls upon member States to renew their commitment to PADIS, particularly, by:

(i) providing, through appropriate channels, their support at the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly to secure for PADIS the necessary inputs under the regular budget for the period 1990-1991 of the United Nations Secretariat; and,

(ii) making voluntary financial contributions to PADIS;

5. Commends those member States that have already designated their national participating centres in the PADIS network and encourages them to make fuller utilization of the products and services available to them through PADIS;

6. Invites member States that have not yet nominated their national participating centres to do so at the earliest possible time;

7. Expresses its appreciation to African missions in New York for their support to PADIS and requests them to continue their efforts in the appropriate forums;

8. Thanks: (i) the United Nations Development Programme for its additional support to permit the participation of North African countries in the PADIS regional programme as well for as its on-going support to PADIS Phase III; (ii) the International Development Research Centre (Canada) for its continuing support to PADIS;

9. Calls upon: (i) UNDP to continue funding through 1991 the personnel component of PADIS Phase III at its 1987-1990 level; (ii) IDRC to continue its support to PADIS through the approval of new grants; and (iii) other donors who have not yet done so to contribute to PADIS for the overall benefit of information for development in Africa;

10. Calls upon the Executive Secretary to develop fully in the Medium-Term Plan for 1992-1997 a subprogramme of substantive activities for development information systems in Africa including the development and maintenance of data bases and the operation of a network of development information in order to promote the exchange of information among member States to the benefit of balanced and self-reliant African development;

11. Also requests the Executive Secretary: (i) to explore the ways and means by which increasing levels of resources could be devoted to information systems activities under the forthcoming United Nations Medium-Term Plan for the period 1992-1997; (ii) to intensify his efforts to diversify the sources of extra-budgetary funding available to PADIS in order to increase the technical assistance to member States in this strategic area of development; (iii) to call upon PADIS to intensify its marketing efforts in order to enhance the utilization of its services and products; (iv) to undertake in collaboration with member States and donor organizations periodic evaluations of the continued effectiveness, relevance and impact of PADIS; and (v) to submit a report on the implementation of this resolution to the twenty-fourth session of the Commission.

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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

Fourth meeting of the Regional
Technical Committee for PADIS

Addis Ababa
23-25 March 1989

Item 3 of the provisional agenda

REPORT ON QUESTIONS ARISING
FROM PRECEDING MEETINGS OF ECA

1. Since the third Meeting of the Regional Technical Committee (RTC), held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 15-16 April 1987, several meetings with a bearing on PADIS activities have been held, including the eighth and ninth meetings of the Technical Preparatory Committee of the Whole (TEPCOW), the thirteenth and fourteenth meetings of the ECA Conference of Ministers, the fifth session of the Joint Conference of African Planners, Statisticians and Demographers, the eighth meeting of the Chief Executives of ECA-sponsored Institutions and meetings of the policy organs of the Tangier - Niamey - Gisenyi - Lusaka - and Yaoundé-based MULPOCs. At the time of writing, the second meeting of the Standing Committee on the Harmonization and Standardization of Information and Documentation Services in ECA-sponsored institutions to be held on 15, 16 and 17 March 1989 has not yet taken place. The report of this Committee's meeting will be presented to the Regional Technical Committee under provisional agenda item 5.

Eighth meeting of the Technical Preparatory Committee of the Whole

2. At its eighth meeting, held in Addis Ababa in April 1987, the report of the third meeting of the RTC was submitted to TEPCOW, which took due note of it.

Thirteenth meeting of the ECA Conference of Ministers

3. The meeting adopted two resolutions of direct relevance to the PADIS work programme. These were resolution 600 (XXII) on Information Systems Development in Africa and resolution 618 (XXII) on an In-depth Study of the United Nations Intergovernmental Structures and Functions in the Economic and Social Fields.

4. In the operative paragraphs of resolution 600 (XXII), the meeting (i) adopted the report of the third meeting of the PADIS Regional Technical Committee and took note of its recommendations as well as the PADIS work plan for 1987-1988 and strategies for the period 1987-1991 contained therein; (ii) called upon the Government of the Niger and the ECA secretariat to intensify their efforts to launch as soon as possible the West African Documentation and Information System; (iii) expressed its appreciation to the United Nations Development Programme and the International Development Research Centre of Canada for their continued support of PADIS as it enters its third phase; (iv) commended the continuously evolving co-operation between ECA/PADIS and UNESCO/PGI in assisting African member States in the areas of documentation and information, particularly the programme being developed in the context of the UNDP Fourth Programming Cycle; (v) commended also Zaire and Zambia for their financial contributions to the development of the PADIS system and network, in particular, to the establishment of the Central African Documentation and Information System (CADIS) and the Eastern and Southern African Documentation and Information System (ESADIS) respectively; (vi) called upon member States and the international community to include PADIS in their pledging to the United Nations Trust Fund for African Development; (vii) called upon PADIS to continue its ongoing activities in systems and network development and to extend its activities to the development of advisory services in information systems development and policy, innovative user services, training

in information systems, promotion of horizontal co-operation in information exchange in the region, provision of access to its data base for African member States and undertaking research on improved methodologies for statistical and non-numerical data base development; (viii) requested the specialized agencies of the United Nations system to intensify their support to PADIS, particularly by making available the data base and information products they generate to allow for wider dissemination in the region; (ix) requested also the Executive Secretary to assist member States in this vital area by taking the necessary measures to make information systems development and user services as part of the activities to be financed from the regular budget of the United Nations, beginning with the Medium-term Plan for the period 1990-1995; (x) requested further that the Executive Secretary should explore ways and means of including more technical co-operation activities on information systems development in the ECA work programme and budget for 1988-1989; (xi) further requested the Executive Secretary to report on progress made in the implementation of this resolution to the twenty-third session of the Commission.

5. In the operative paragraphs of resolution 618 (XXII) relating to methods of work, including periodicity of meetings and agenda of the institutional machinery of the Commission, the Conference of Ministers decided that the technical subsidiary bodies of ECA, including the RTC, should continue to meet on a biennial basis. The same point also stipulated that meetings should be short and business-like. The lengths of documents to be submitted to them and of those of their own reports should conform to the standards set by the United Nations.

Fifth session of the Joint Conference of African Planners, Statisticians and Demographers

6. At the fifth session of the Joint Conference of African Planners, Statisticians and Demographers, held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 21-28 March 1988, the Information Science Committee took note of a study prepared by the secretariat on Training facilities available for the training of information and documentation scientists in Africa. A report on PADIS activities (1986-1987), the approved work programme (1988-1989) and the draft work programme (1990-1991) was also submitted to the Committee.

7. The Information Science Committee recommended the extension for a further period of four years, of the mandate of the five experts representing member States on the PADIS Regional Technical Committee, viz., Algeria, Ethiopia, the Niger, Zaire and Zambia.

8. The secretariat of PADIS presented two documents to the session of the conference: The first on the Use of micro-computers in statistics and information systems was examined by the Statistics and Information Science Joint Committee. The other on the supportive role of adequate documentation in plan preparation, implementing and monitoring was presented to the Planning and Information Science Joint Committee.

Ninth meeting of the Technical Preparatory Committee of the Whole

9. At its ninth meeting, held in Niamey, Niger, 6-13 April 1988, TEPCOW took note of the report of the Joint Conference on African Planners, Statisticians and Demographers and of the recommendations contained in it.

Fourteenth meeting of the ECA Conference of Ministers

10. The ECA Conference of Ministers, at the recommendation of the Joint Conference of African Planners, Statisticians and Demographers, supported by TEPCOW, decided to renew the mandate of the experts already sitting on the RTC, for a further term of four years.

11. The meeting also adopted resolution 634 (XXIII) co-operation between ECA and the UNDP Regional Bureau for Arab States and European Programmes. In the operative paragraphs, the Conference of Ministers urged the Administrator of UNDP to take the necessary measures that would enable the Regional Bureau for Arab States and European Programmes to allocate, within the framework of its Fourth Programming Cycle, the resources to enable the countries within its jurisdiction (Algeria, Djibouti, Egypt, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Morocco, Somalia, the Sudan and Tunisia) to participate effectively in ECA's regional and subregional programmes and to involve ECA in the preparation and implementation of projects concerning those States.

Meetings of the policy organs of the MULPOCs

12. The policy organs of the Tangier-based MULPOC (Morocco) met in Tangier: the Committee of Experts from 30 January to 1 February 1989 and the Council of Plenipotentiaries, 2-3 February 1989. These meetings were preceded by the third Meeting of the Subregional Technical Committee of PADIS (SRTC) for North Africa, which was also held in Tangier on 29 January 1989.

13. The Subregional Technical Committee of PADIS first reviewed PADIS activities both in the Central Co-ordination Office and in the subregion, before drawing up the following recommendations:

(a) For the attention of the UNDP Regional Bureau for Arab States and European Programmes:

- (i) To release the money allocated to the project once the regional bureau has ensured that the project document has been signed by three member States (Morocco and Somalia have already signed).

(b) For the attention of PADIS:

- (i) To complete and publish as soon as possible a brochure on the services offered by PADIS, in all three languages (Arabic, English and French);
- (ii) To compile and distribute a leaflet on the international data banks installed in PADIS, accompanied by a summary of the contents;

- (iii) To distribute more widely PADIS's existing publications in order to benefit the maximum possible number of users;
- (iv) To set in operation the Arabization programme, giving priority to publishing an Arabic edition of DEVINDEX AFRICA and to ensure the participation of member States in training activities in Arabic;
- (v) To reduce the costs of publication and the delays, by using local publishing facilities;
- (vi) To carry out a study on user needs in the subregion, similar to the pilot study by PADIS in three English-speaking countries;
- (vii) To make as much use as possible of subregional skills to carry out advisory missions;
- (viii) To promote an increased awareness of the nature existing documentation centres in the subregion by funding information study tours and studies for national administrations, in co-operation with officially designated participating centres.

(c) For the attention of member States:

- (i) To ensure more participation at the required level in the activities of the SRTC;
- (ii) To request those who have not already done so (the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and Tunisia) to designate their national participating centres as soon as possible, in order to complete the sub-network.

14. As regards the presidency of the Committee whose mandate is about to expire, the SRTC unanimously decided to renew the mandate of the current President, Mr. Ahmed Fassi-Fihri (Morocco) for a further period of four years.

15. The President of the SRTC presented the Committee report and an account of activities carried out in the subregion during the past year, to the committee of experts. The representative of Egypt raised the question of duplication and of whether the moment was opportune for creating such a system (NADIS), a question which had given rise to the same reservations expressed by his country at the eighth meeting of experts in 1988. The President of SRTC, while recognizing the relevance of this concern nevertheless drew attention to the complexity of information matters which made the creation of a specific network essential. The meeting of the committee of experts took note of the report of the Subregional Technical Committee NADIS/PADIS.

16. During the meeting of the Council of Plenipotentiaries, the Egyptian delegation reiterated their reservations on the programme, expressing the opinion that the creation of NADIS was a duplication of existing similar institutions in the subregion.

17. The policy organs of the other MULPOCs were made aware of PADIS activities both in the Central Co-ordination Office and within their respective subregions.

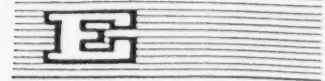
18. The Council of Ministers of the Niamey MULPOC adopted resolution No.7, the operative paragraphs of which: (i) requested the Executive Secretary of ECA to seek the funds necessary to bring WADIS into immediate operation; (ii) further requested the MULPOC to prepare a project document to be submitted to funding agencies for financing; (iii) urged the MULPOC and those intergovernmental organizations having documentation and information systems to work closely in order to avoid duplication of effort.

19. The Committee of Experts of the Lusaka MULPOC, which met in Harare, Zimbabwe, 1-4 March 1989, took note of the report on PADIS activities and requested that ESADIS be made operational as soon as possible.



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Fourth Meeting of the Regional Technical
Committee for PADIS

23-25 March 1989
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Item 3 of the provisional agenda

**PADIS TECHNICAL CONSULTATIVE MEETING OF
DIRECTORS OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE
SCHOOLS IN AFRICA**

20-24 FEBRUARY 1989

RECOMMENDATIONS

R E C O M M E N D A T I O N S

The meeting reviewed the papers presented by the heads of library and information schools in Africa and the Secretariat, and made the following recommendations:

1. That the present exercise involving African universities and other training institutions in the implementation of the PADIS project in Africa be strengthened and that African universities make available to PADIS the necessary tools at their disposal to make this exercise successful.
2. That the new elements for inclusion in the existing curricula of library and information schools be taken as a blue print. However, the meeting took cognisance of the fact that some schools have already included some of the elements in the existing curricula.
3. That PADIS, African universities, and other training institutions work out modalities of incorporating new elements in the curricula according to a mutually agreed timetable.
4. That PADIS, African universities, and other training institutions cooperate in the production of training materials taking cognisance of the experience of training institutions in this area.
5. For the PADIS system and network to be used by African member States and institutions, PADIS should intensify its user sensitization exercises to promote greater utilization of its services.
6. That PADIS should organize user seminars, in order to identify its users, what type of information they require and how users can access such information.
7. That continuing education in the area of information management techniques be organized on a regular basis for the practicing managers of information systems, services and centres by PADIS and African universities and other training institutions.
8. That PADIS' suggestion to access theses at African universities was acceptable to those represented at this meeting, and the meeting recommended that PADIS and individual universities should work out the modalities of carrying out such an exercise.

9. That PADIS' suggestions to co-operate with African universities and other training institutions in the preparation of training material was accepted. The meeting therefore recommended that in carrying out this exercise, due attention should be paid to linguistic differences.
10. Considering the value that information systems and services have in relation to decision-making and planning at all government levels;

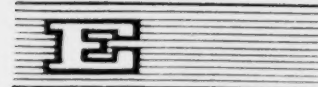
Recognizing the considerable shortage of adequate manpower to develop such information systems and services;

It was the view of the meeting that special efforts be made:

- (a) to support the development of education and training facilities in the area of library and information science, at national, sub-regional and regional levels.
 - (b) to strengthen existing programmes, taking into account linguistic, geographic and socio-economic factors prevailing in the region.
11. Considering the substantial investments that have already been made by bilateral and multilateral agencies, regional programmes already initiated at Addis Ababa University and the University of Ibadan should be quickly brought into operation.



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REPORT OF THE THIRD MEETING OF THE SUBREGIONAL
TECHNICAL COMMITTEE FOR PADIS/NADIS

Tangier, 29 January 1989

INTRODUCTION

1. The third meeting of the Subregional Technical Committee for NADIS was held in Tangier, Morocco, 29 January 1989.

The meeting was attended by representatives of Algeria, the Libyan Arab Jamahariya and Morocco (the current President). The secretariat was represented by the Director of PADIS and the Director of the Tangier-based MULPOC. Observers were present from CAFRAD and the Islamic Centre for Trade Development.

The Documentation Centre of the League of Arab States sent its apologies for absence.

2. The current President of the Committee, M. Ahmed Fassi Fihri, Director of the Moroccan National Documentation Centre, welcomed the participants and drew attention to the importance of the project to the development of countries in the subregion.

He then proposed the following agenda which was unanimously accepted:

(a) PADIS activities (October 1987 to November 1988) and interim-report on the progress of the NADIS project;

(b) Election of a President of the Committee for the next mandate.

3. The Director of PADIS gave an account of project activities during the period under consideration, both at regional and subregional levels. He informed the meeting about developments in the PADIS system and network, particularly:

(i) The increased in the number and volume of information data bases;

(ii) The increase in the number of officially designated national participating centres, from 8 to 27.

4. He informed participants of the substantial increase in the number of users subscribed to the Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI) service. This service is available thanks to PADIS's use of international organization data bases, which complement those entered at the PADIS Central Co-ordination Office.

5. On training, the Director of PADIS told participants that two seminars had been held in November 1988, one on policy and managerial aspects of development information systems, held in Tangier, Morocco and the other on national information and informatic policies, held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

The reports of the seminars, which are being edited, will be widely distributed.

6. Bearing in mind the importance which the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya places on documentation and information, the representative of that country hoped that invitations would be sent out in time for his country to participate effectively in training seminars organized by PADIS.

7. During the period under consideration, the planned publications programme was completed (particularly DEVINDEX and the PADIS Newsletter).

8. The results of a pilot study on user needs, which was carried out in three African countries, will be submitted to the next meeting of the Regional Technical Committee for PADIS before being distributed.

9. The attention of participants was drawn to the advisory service carried out in the region during the period.

10. On the strictly subregional aspects of the project, the Director of PADIS recalled the efforts undertaken both by the President of the Subregional Technical Committee and by ECA to obtain the finance which would allow the effective participation of North African countries in the PADIS system and network (Project RAB/88/012 submitted to the UNDP Regional Bureau for Arab States and European Programmes). He recalled that implementation of the PADIS/ALDOC (the Arab League Documentation Centre) joint programme for the benefit of the States in the subregion, would be possible only thanks to this long-awaited financial assistance.

11. The Director of the Tangier-based MULPOC, who had just toured the subregion, suggested that PADIS should make its services to potential users better known. This publicity exercise could take the form of an information brochure designed for the public at large.

12. During the ensuing debate, the participants congratulated the President of the Subregional Technical Committee on the praiseworthy achievements during his mandate, including particularly:

- (i) The drawing up of the joint PADIS/ALDOC work programme for the establishment of the NADIS project;
- (ii) The consideration by the UNDP Regional Bureau for Arab States and European Programmes of project RAB/88/012.

13. The participants also congratulated PADIS and its Director on the progress made in the development of the PADIS system and network. They requested the Director of PADIS to convey their appreciation to the ECA Executive Secretary for his unstinting efforts to ensure the success of this project.

14. The participants regretted the delay in financing the subregional centre by the UNDP Regional Bureau for Arab States and European Programmes.

This delay has considerably limited project activities in the subregion, particularly the implementation of the joint PADIS/ALDOC work programme, which depended on this financing.

The signing of the project document by the States concerned should lead to the rapid unblocking of resources.

15. The Committee regretted the lack of participation in its activities of the majority of member States and underlined the importance of involvement by experts from all member States.

To conclude its deliberations, the Committee put the forward the following recommendations:

16. Recommendation for the attention of the UNDP Regional Bureau for Arab States and European Programmes

The unblocking of allocated credits to the project once the signatures of the three member States have been noted by that office.

It should be noted that two signatures (Morocco and Somalia) have already been officially noted.

17. Recommendation for the attention of PADIS

- (i) To complete and publish as soon as possible a brochure on the services offered by PADIS, in all three languages (Arabic, English and French);
- (ii) To compile and distribute a leaflet on the international data banks installed in PADIS, together with a summary of their contents;
- (iii) To ensure a wider distribution of PADIS material in order to reach the maximum possible number of users;
- (iv) To continue with the Arabization Programme, with priority to the publication of an Arabic edition of DEVINDEX AFRICA and to ensure that member States participate in training activities in Arabic;
- (v) To reduce the costs of publication and the delays, by using local publishing facilities;
- (vi) To carry out a study on user needs in the subregion, similar to the pilot study carried out by PADIS in three English-speaking countries;
- (vii) To make maximum use of existing skills in the subregion for carrying out advisory missions;

- (viii) To promote an improved knowledge of existing documentation centres in the subregion among national officials by financing meetings and studies on information matters, in co-operation with officially designated participating centres.

18. Recommendation for the attention of member States

- (i) To ensure increased and appropriate participation in SRTC activities;
- (ii) To request those who have not already done so (the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and Tunisia) to designate their national participating centre as soon as possible, in order to complete the network.

19. Agenda item two: Election of the President of the Committee

The Director of PADIS recalled the terms of resolution 498 (XIX) of the Conference of Ministers which established the Regional Technical Committee.

He informed participants of the experiences of other Subregional Technical Committees and suggested that the mandate of the President should be extended to four years, bearing in mind that the frequency of regular meetings had been changed to two years.

20. He gave his appreciation of the activity of the current President for the quality of work accomplished and the efforts undertaken during his mandate.

21. On the proposal submitted by the representative of Algeria and seconded by the representative of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, the Committee unanimously decided:

- To extend the mandate of the President of the Committee to four years;
- To renew the mandate of Mr. Ahmed Fassi Fihri, Director of the Moroccan National Documentation Centre, as President of the Committee for a further period of four years.

22. Mr. Ahmed Fassi Fihri thanked the Committee for this show of confidence. In accepting the further responsibility, he assured the Committee that he would spare no effort to ensure the success of his task.

23. After the adoption of this report, the meeting was declared closed.



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Item 4 of the provisional agenda

**PROGRESS REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PADIS
PROGRAMME DURING 1987-1989**

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The period 1987 to 1989 signified the first two years of the third phase (1987-91) of the PADIS programme. Several important developments have taken place over this two-year period. Section II of this report narrates progress made during 1987-89 in the implementation of PADIS, notably in respect of training, advisory services, networking, user services and data base development.

2. At its third meeting held in March 1987, the Regional Technical Committee had put forward a number of recommendations. Section III provides a summary of follow-up actions taken to implement those recommendations.

3. Section IV provides conclusions in respect of production of outputs; attainment of project objectives; the impact the project has had; and problems and prospects in programme implementation.

II. PROGRESS IN PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION, 1987-89

A. TRAINING

4. Table 1 depicts planned training courses and progress made in implementing them.

Table 1

Progress made in the area of scheduled training courses

Planned training events	Progress made
1. Six training course in PADIS documentation methodologies at national level	Six training courses delivered at national level in Ethiopia, the Gambia, Mauritius, Malawi, Seychelles, Swaziland
2. One subregional workshop in computerized documentation techniques	Two workshops held; one for countries of the East and Southern African subregion held in Lusaka, Zambia; and another for countries of Central Africa held in Kinshasa, Zaire
3. One regional training seminar in policy and managerial aspects of development information systems	One regional seminar held in Tangiers, Morocco
4. One regional workshop in statistical data base development and utilization for government planners and statisticians	Two regional workshops for English- and French-speaking countries, respectively, held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
5. Four study-tours and familiarization missions for national and project staff	Two PADIS staff underwent training in the use of CDS-ISIS software in Europe; head of the PADIS national participating centre in Benin was received in Addis Ababa

5. In addition to the above, the following ad hoc training exercises were conducted:

(a) Training course in Addis Ababa in computerized documentation techniques for staff from Malawi and Swaziland documentation centres;

(b) Training course in data base development for three staff members from the Government of Madagascar Ministry of Planning;

(c) Training course in Addis Ababa in computerized documentation techniques for documentation centre staff from the Gambia, Seychelles and Ethiopia;

(d) Training course in Addis Ababa in the use of MINISIS and CDS/ISIS software for documentation centre staff from Cape Verde, Niger and Guinea;

(e) Training course in Addis Ababa in microfiching techniques for the PADIS national participating centre in Ethiopia.

6. In summary, eleven scheduled courses were delivered, the planned level thus having been exceeded by one. In addition, five ad hoc training events were organized.

B. ADVISORY SERVICES AND TECHNICAL CO-OPERATION

7. The project's work programme under UNDP-funded project RAF/86/063 for PADIS Phase III envisaged ten advisory service/technical co-operation missions per annum; i.e. twenty such missions during the reporting period. The project document specified the following areas as the objects of advisory services/technical co-operation activities: assessment of the needs and capacities of participating centres; formulation of information policies and plans; design of sectoral and national systems; choice of technologies; identification of lead institutions; and establishment of subregional centres. Such services were meant to be for the benefit of member States; inter-governmental organizations; and PADIS subregional centres. The following progress has been made:

(a) Advisory missions for the benefit of member States were organized to :

- (i) Malawi to assess the needs and capacities of the participating centre designated by the Government;
- (ii) Swaziland to assist in the identification of a participating centre;
- (iii) Benin to assist in the computerization of thesauri;
- (iv) Ethiopia on a preliminary investigation to set up an industrial and technological information network;
- (v) Djibouti on the creation of a national information and documentation centre;
- (vi) Benin on the installation and utilization of PADIS-STAT;
- (vii) Algeria on the installation and utilization of PADIS-STAT;
- (viii) Cape Verde to assess needs and capacities of the national participating centre;
- (ix) Congo on statistical data base development.

(b) Advisory missions for the benefit of African IGO's were organized to :

- (i) the Kagera Basin Organization (KBO) to assist in the formulation of a second-phase project for the KBO Documentation Centre and subsequently to advise on data base development (two missions);
- (ii) ECOWAS to assist in the evaluation of its automated systems for customs data acquisition;
(ASYCUDA);
- (iii) the Association of African Universities to advise on the reorganization of its Documentation Centre and on choice of technologies.

(c) In addition to these consultancy-type advisory services, the PADIS project rendered a number of technical co-operation services to both member States and agencies. These activities involved undertaking studies, presentation of technical papers and providing comments/advice as appropriate at meetings, seminars, etc. They included:

(i) provision of a resource person to national workshops on the management of national information network (Zambia) and on the establishment of a national network (Tanzania);

(ii) participation in a study on the feasibility of South-South co-operation for the development of information and documentation systems in sub-Saharan Africa;

(iii) participation in a study on information management training needs;

(iv) participation in the elaboration of IDRC's strategy for its information sciences programme in Sub-Saharan Africa;

(v) participation at the Conference on Science and Technology Policy for Ethiopia;

(vi) participation at the African Association for the Advancement of Science Workshop on Scientific Information;

(vii) participation at the Conference of Vice-Chancellors of African Universities (in 1987 and 1989) to present papers on the role of universities in the implementation of the PADIS programme;

(viii) participation at the expert group meeting on the development of an African Standards Information Network;

(x) participation in the meeting of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Human Resources Development and Utilization in Africa;

(d) A number of missions were undertaken for the purposes of establishing PADIS subregional centres. The missions' objectives were to negotiate with host governments (two missions to Kinshasa, Zaire on Central African Documentation and Information System - CADIS) or to finalize installation of equipment (two missions to Lusaka, Zambia for East and Southern Africa Documentation and Information System - ESADIS, and one to Niamey, Niger for West African Documentation and Information System - WADIS).

C. MEETINGS AND TECHNICAL CONSULTATIVE SEMINARS

8. The PADIS project serviced a number of important meetings during this reporting period. Foremost of these was the Fifth Session of the Joint Conference of African Planners, Statisticians and Demographers held in April 1988. The Conference considered a progress report on PADIS, the work programme for 1989-90, as well as member States' representation in the Regional Technical Committee for PADIS. In addition, two technical reports were submitted to it for its consideration (see Section II. G below).

9. Annual reports were also submitted to the five MULPOC Legislative Organs in 1988 and 1989. Similarly, executive summaries were presented to the ECA Conference of Ministers at its twenty-third session held in 1988.

10. Two meetings of the Standing Committee on the Harmonization and Standardization of Information Systems at ECA-Sponsored Regional and Subregional Institutions (SCOHSDIS) have been convened following its creation by the meeting of Chief Executives of such institutions in 1986.

11. Three major experts' technical consultation seminars took place:

(a) The Regional Seminar on National Information and Informatics Policies in Africa, 28 November to 1 December 1988 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia;

(b) The Technical Consultative Meeting Between Heads of Schools of Library and Information Science in Africa, 20-24 February 1989 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia; and,

(c) Technical Consultative Seminar of National Co-ordinators for a Data Base on on-going Research Projects, 9-10 February 1988 in Nairobi, Kenya.

12. The requisite technical as well as background reports were prepared and presented to these seminars.

D. USER SERVICES

13. The project continued to deliver services to users in the form of : (a) published indexes to development literature; (b) selective dissemination of information (SDI); (c) retrospective bibliographic search services; and (d) document delivery.

14. Services to users through published indexes have been continued. Efforts have been made to distribute DEVINDEX-AFRICA

to a broader geographic area within and outside Africa as well as in reaching out to a larger number of end-users and intermediaries (libraries, documentation centres, etc.) Four issues of DEVINDEX-AFRICA were produced and disseminated in this regard.

15. Growth in the number of individual and institutional subscribers to the SDI service has also been achieved with the number now standing at 167 as opposed to 38 two years ago.

16. The number of requests for bibliographic searches and for particular documents has increased from a mere 15 for the second half of 1986 to 250 for the second-half of 1988. In all, 647 user requests were serviced during 1987 and 1988.

17. Requests for information on African development experts, institutions and projects were negligible prior to 1987. However, 154 requests for such information were filled during 1987-1989.

18. Online user service facilities were available to the OAU Secretariat and the UNDP and ILO offices in Addis Ababa.

E. DATA BASE DEVELOPMENT

19. Data base development expanded on several fronts. PADIS-DEV, the bibliographic data base on African development literature managed by the PADIS Central Co-ordination Office and to which national participating centres contribute, grew by 1863 entries. Of this, 1524 records were contributed by national centres. PAD-DEV has been used to generate the DEVINDEX-AFRICA.

20. The receipt of inputs to the PADIS complementary files series (data bases acquired from UN and other international bodies) has increased. A new data base, ILCADOC, was acquired containing approximately 5000 references. Previously existing data bases have increased by 7550 entries. These data bases were used to generate the SDI service and for retrospective search services.

21. The data base on African experts has grown by approximately 1000 entries during this reporting period. Contents of the data base have been used for search services and for the preparation of the Directory of Experts, presently under print.

22. Two new data bases have been opened: (i) data base on on-going research projects in East and Southern African countries; and, (ii) a data base on African development institutions. Presently, they contain over 1400 and 100 references respectively. The Directory of On-going Research Projects is under print. The data collection exercise was conducted jointly with the Eastern and Southern African Research project (ESAURP) using national co-

ordinators in the fifteen countries where the exercise was conducted.

23. Major developments in respect of the statistical data bank (PADIS-STAT) include: increase in the number of years covered by the data base from 21 to 26 years; possibilities of the transportability of the data bank from the Hewlett Packard computer and its operating system to IBM-compatible micro-computers and DbaseIII data base management systems; and the preparation of guidelines for data base administrators and end users. Missions for installation and training in use of the data base were also undertaken, as enumerated supra.

F. TOOLS AND METHODOLOGIES

24. Previously developed tools and methodologies for bibliographic work were maintained on a continuous basis. Two activities were notable in this regard:

(a) Revision of the PADIS Manual for Bibliographic Analysis has been concluded. The new version contains chapters on guidelines for cataloguing, indexing and abstracting;

(b) PADIS contributed to the latest revision of the MACROTHESAURUS - a controlled vocabulary for information processing in the field of social and economic development. It is maintained by a network of international organizations where PADIS represents the Africa region.

25. In addition, brief and simple guidelines have been prepared on data collection for the data base on on-going research projects.

G. STUDIES AND TECHNICAL REPORTS

26. The Project work programme for 1987-88 envisaged three studies: (i) survey of development information needs; (ii) study on information utilization problems, information marketing strategies and innovative information products and services; and (iii) survey on the use of micro-computers in documentation and information systems in Africa.

27. It was found operationally much more meaningful to combine certain aspects of the second study with the first one. A consultancy was commissioned to prepare the combined study; and, following field investigations in Ethiopia, Nigeria and Zimbabwe, a report has been prepared. Results of that study will be presented under agenda item 5 of this meeting. A second study will

be commissioned during 1989 to deal with the issues of marketing strategies and innovative products and services.

28. The third study on use of micro-computers was carried out by project staff. The results were presented in a report subsequently submitted to the fifth session of the Joint Conference of African Planners, Statisticians and Demographers.

29. In addition to the above (and numerous other mission reports and conference papers) a number of substantive and investigative reports were prepared by project staff as inputs to conferences and expert group meetings. Amongst such technical reports were:

(i) The Perceived Role of African Universities in the Implementation of the PADIS Programme;

(ii) Use of Statistical Software Packages in Statistical Computing;

(iii) Issues in Information and Documentation Systems for Plan Preparation, Implementation and Monitoring;

(iv) Issues Pertaining to National Information Policies in Africa;

(v) Feasibility of South-South Co-operation for the Development of Information and Documentation Systems in Sub-Saharan Africa.

H. PUBLICITY

30. Public relations work became a major area of project activity with the start of the third phase of PADIS in 1987. A major undertaking in this regard was the preparation of the PADIS Newsletter in English and French. Eight quarterly issues have been prepared and disseminated. Circulation has now reached 1000 copies. The content as well as the appearance of the Newsletter has significantly improved with the inclusion of editorial columns, review of important publications and an expanded news/announcement column.

31. Ad hoc publicity events have greatly increased with an increasing number of visitors arriving at Africa Hall undertaking a visit to the PADIS/CCO as well. Training programmes, attendance at meetings and travel by project and national centre staff have augmented the regular publicity efforts by the project.

I. NETWORKING

32. During the period under review, thirteen governments have designated their participating centres. This brings the total number of participating centres to 27. The newly-designated centres are from: Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, the Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, the Gambia, Mauritius, Nigeria, Rwanda, Swaziland, Uganda and Zambia.

33. Of these thirteen newly-designated participating centres, four of them (Cape Verde, Ethiopia, Gambia, Swaziland) have started actively participating in the regional network by sending inputs as well as by receiving outputs. This has been achieved through advisory services and training delivered to the concerned centres. This brings to ten the number of designated centres that participate actively in the network, six of them being centres that joined the network prior to 1987.

34. Nine of the thirteen newly-designated centres have received technical assistance from PADIS in the form of advisory services or through training programmes organized at national and regional levels.

35. The remaining four of the thirteen newly-designated centres (Burkina Faso, Egypt, Nigeria, Uganda) have not benefitted from PADIS assistance as yet, partly because some of them were designated very recently and partly because of the long delays encountered in receiving response from governments on the assistance offered to them.

36. The above being the progress made in terms of activities for newly-designated national centres, six of the centres that started participating prior to 1987 continued to do so at fairly satisfactory levels. These are centres from Algeria, Benin, Botswana, Malawi, Morocco and Togo. The level of participation from designated centres in Guinea, Niger and the Sudan has relatively declined, in spite of the fact that assistance in the form of regional training courses and advisory services have been rendered to them.

37. Activities aimed at increasing the participation of institutional participating centres were carried out through the Standing Committee for the Harmonization and Standardization of Information Systems at ECA-Sponsored Regional and Sub-Regional Institutions (SCOHS DIS). Membership in SCOHS DIS has now been opened to African inter-governmental institutions which are not sponsored by ECA. In spite of the existence of such a well placed machinery, the contributions of institutional participating centres to the regional data base remain nil.

III. FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS ON RECOMMENDATIONS ADOPTED BY THE COMMITTEE AT ITS THIRD SESSION

38. At its third meeting held in April 1987, the RTC put forward two recommendations:

- (i) that a study be conducted on the organizational status, structure and delivery mechanisms of PADIS in the light of new techno-economic realities as per the terms of reference adopted by the Committee; and,
- (ii) that PADIS work closely with host governments for CADIS and WADIS to conclude the agreements for the establishment of the respective centres.

A. STUDY ON PADIS

39. It may be recalled that the Committee identified eight major areas to be investigated in the above-mentioned study. These were:

- (a) identification of different organizational formulae for PADIS and analysis of their financial and organizational implications;
- (b) identification of mechanisms for increased participation of member States and profiles of national focal points;
- (c) elaboration of the scope of PADIS;
- (d) structure of the PADIS network;
- (e) study on choice and use of new technologies: hardware, software, telecommunications; etc.
- (f) norms, methodologies and issues of standardization and harmonization;
- (g) identification of mechanisms for increasing the contribution of UN specialized agencies and international organizations in the areas of activity of PADIS;
- (h) determination of the appropriateness of PADIS products and services in meeting the actual and perceived priority needs of end-users;
- (i) investigation of use of the Arabic language in computer-based information processing and transfer

40. It may also be recalled that the Committee had mandated the PADIS/CCO to seek extra-budgetary sources of funding to execute the study. The ad hoc Sub-Committee set up by the Committee to elaborate the above-cited terms of reference for the study had estimated the study might cost US\$70,000 to US\$100,000 of which US\$30,000 to US\$50,000 were expected to be available under PADIS extrabudgetary-funded projects, as and when the projects proposed and then under review by donors were approved. There would therefore be a shortfall of between US\$40,000 and US\$50,000.

41. Of three such PADIS proposals, only one (RAF 86/053 from the UNDP Regional Bureau for Africa) could make resources available for use in such a study. Proposals to UNDP's Regional Bureau for Arab States and European Programmes was approved only in February 1989. The third, IDRC's assistance to PADIS, did not provide for such expenditures.

42. Given this resource situation, it was not possible to conduct the study in the form and extent desired by the Committee. Instead, only item (h): "determination of the appropriateness of PADIS products and services..." was commissioned and successfully concluded. The PADIS/CCO has also made some efforts in partial fulfillment of item (b): "identification of mechanisms for increased participation of member States and profiles of national focal points." PADIS/CCO circulated to member States the "Criteria for Designation of PADIS National Participating Centres" as amended by the Committee at its last meeting. The outcomes were encouraging in that all thirteen new designation of participating centres by government referred to earlier in this report were received since then.

43. Therefore, it could be surmised that a large segment of the recommended study has yet to be undertaken. With the approval of UNDP's project RAB/88/012 (North African countries Participation in PADIS), it will now be possible to carry out portions of the study in the North African subregion. However, it will require the above mentioned level of additional resources if the study is to be concluded on time and in the manner desired by the Committee

B. SUBREGIONAL CENTRES

44. The second major recommendation of the Committee was in respect of CADIS and WADIS. In this regard, the PADIS/CCO had:

- (i) carried-out negotiations with the host government of CADIS, the Republic of Zaire. A draft agreement has been

submitted for its consideration and response to it is awaited.

- (ii) Similar negotiations were carried-out with the Government of Niger. Since the Government did not find it expedient to finance WADIS, the centre is being established within the premises of ECA's Multinational Programming and Operational Centre (MULPOC) at Niamey. Preparation of the premises of the Centre have been concluded and the staff member to operate the centre during the initial period will be trained over the next few months.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

45. In the following paragraphs attempt is made to draw certain conclusions in respect of (i) production of outputs; (ii) attainment of project objectives on the basis of established success criteria; and (iii) on project impact. In considering the following, the Committee should bear in mind that the project is only halfway through its present phase and that conclusions in respect of attainment of objectives and project impact can thus only be indicative.

A. PRODUCTION OF OUTPUTS

46. A narrative on implementation of project activities has been provided under Section II of this report. It can be concluded that the quantity of planned outputs have either been met or exceeded during the established time frames. There were minor departures from planned commitments in terms of reformulation of previously defined outputs.

47. No independent and in-depth evaluation has been made during the period under review. Therefore, no remarks are being made here as to the quality of the outputs.

B. ATTAINMENT OF PROJECT OBJECTIVES

48. The objectives of this phase of the PADIS project are clearly outlined in the Project Document for UNDP funded project RAF 86/053, PADIS: Phase III. The four immediate objectives and the success criteria established for measuring their attainment are presented below in brief, along with appropriate remarks.

- (a) Immediate objective 1: Establishment and strengthening of PADIS network.

Success criteria: participating centres inputs into the system and their demand for output; upgrading of skills and know-how of participating centres' staff; introduction of up-to-date information handling techniques; use of compatible methods by participating centres; etc.

Remarks: During the period under review six of the twenty-five designated participating centres contributed 1524 references to the PADIS regional bibliographic data base. PADIS outputs are distributed to participating centres on a regular basis. It is not clearly discernible, for lack of data, whether PADIS participating centres are the major source of demand for PADIS products. Training programmes were delivered to staff of national centres. Relevant skills have been imparted through this programme. But more in-depth surveys will have to be done to measure retention and use of such skills. Up-to-date information handling techniques have continued to be introduced in participating centres although this was largely upon the centres' own efforts rather than as result of PADIS assistance. Use of compatible methods by participating centres has been achieved as far as inputs to PADIS are concerned. But a large number of the participating centres still utilize methodologies other than that of PADIS for their on-going activities - PADIS methodologies have not been fully internalized. Two sets of activities will have to be staged during the next two-and-a-half years in order to attain their objective: (i) to enhance active participation by national and institutional centres; and, (ii) to review and modify accordingly the nature and the extent and content of the PADIS training programme.

(b) Immediate objective 2: Availability of an information resource base

Success criteria: Expansion of existing data bases and creation of new ones; quantity and variety of information collection;

Remarks: PAD-DEV, the regional data base on socio-economic literature has grown by over 20 per cent. This could be considered relatively satisfactory given the extent of participation by national and institutional centres. Receipt of new bibliographic data bases on livestock and energy research have contributed to increased variety of the collection. The implementation of a data base on on-

going research projects is a major accomplishment. Significant achievements have been made in increasing the variety of information, hence increasing the potential of PADIS as an outlet for producers of data bases pertinent to African development.

- (c) Immediate objective 3: Increased access to available information; improved levels of information utilization; and, generation of income to support certain project activities.

Success criteria: Quantity and variety of information products and services; increased use of and demand for information products; level of income generated from sale of products.

Remarks: The quantity and variety of products have seen minor increases. On the other hand, the use of and demand for PADIS products and services has grown severalfold as measured by the requests received and serviced. The transportability of PADIS-STAT has proved valuable, particularly to African IGOs who need a large body of data on several countries. Distribution of PADIS-STAT on diskettes to be used on inexpensive micro-computers available at most IGOs fills a major gap. It appears this growth in demand was partly a result of the public relations effort of the project and its enhanced visibility. The next few years should reveal the feasibility and usefulness of integrated services comprised of bibliographic, statistical and referral information. A modest sum of money has been received through the sale of DEVINDEX-AFRICA to institutions in the developed world. This was achieved even without a fully planned marketing scheme and is therefore encouraging. The thorough attainment of this objective will depend on a vigorous and planned marketing effort; tailoring of products and services; and, increased and effective use of participating centres as outlets for PADIS products.

- (d) Immediate objective 4: Development and utilization of information processing norms, standards and tools and the use of compatible norms and standards by participating centres.

Success criteria: Availability of norms and standards; exchange of information amongst

participating centres with minimal difficulty.

Remarks: Measurable success has been attained in respect of the development of methodologies for bibliographic and referral information management and statistical data bank development. However, the above becoming norms and standards is dependent on their acceptance by institutional and national participating centres. Similarly, the exchange of information amongst participating centres with minimal difficulty can be tested only following a vigorous level of information sharing amongst the centres concerned.

C. PROJECT IMPACT

49. There are a sufficient number of reasons to assume that the project has had an impact on a number of fronts. The following are the areas in which project management believes that impact has been made. Needless to say, a conclusive assessment of the project's impact can be arrived at only following in-depth investigations.

Increased awareness about PADIS and the utilization of its capacities

50. It can be demonstrated that awareness about the project amongst Governments, African organizations, practitioners and to a lesser extent individual users has reached a qualitatively higher level. This is a result of promotional efforts by the project; tangible activities carried out in member States and at institutions; diffusion of information through person to person communication; etc. This is also manifested in the number of participating centres being designated by Governments; increased number of user requests; increased number of requests for technical assistance; etc. In turn these have resulted in a higher level of utilization of capacities existing at the Central Co-ordination Office.

Direct and indirect contributions to national information resource sharing and co-ordination

51. Emerging evidence reveals that the PADIS project has directly and indirectly provided the impetus for national-level efforts to set up national machineries for the co-ordination of information activities and services. This is clearly corroborated by on-going efforts for the formulation of national information policies and the setting-up of national co-ordination councils in several East and Southern African countries most notably in Botswana, Kenya, Malawi, Swaziland and Zambia where the present efforts took their

roots from earlier efforts to set up the Southern African Documentation and Information System. That initiative has survived the past five years in spite of limited PADIS action to nurture it.

Increased Attention to Information Issues and the Image about PADIS as an African Regional Institution Responsible for such Issues

52. It could be hypothesized that there is now a greater degree of awareness about and attention being given to information in the African region both at policy-making and practitioners' levels than was the case ten years ago. This is to be largely attributed to developments surrounding information technologies. The indirect contribution of PADIS in this regard is the fact that it encourages practitioners particularly those in the field of librarianship and documentation to assume their responsibilities for the modernization of information services. With the growing ability of the Central Co-ordination Office to deliver the services expected from it by member States' institutions, it has progressively gained the image of an African regional institution which supersedes the organizational status it occupies. This fact is corroborated by the increasing number of responsibilities asked of it and mandates given to it: (a) at regional and international fora; and (b) through specific requests it has received from countries; (c) donors' readiness to engage PADIS for specific purposes; etc.

D. PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS

53. Put together, the above three areas where the project is believed to have had an impact are both an end onto themselves as well as means to further ends. The project's potential appears to be indeed brighter. The rationale behind the project are being proven to be accurate as new rationale emerge. However, the full exploitation of such potential can be ensured only if prevailing weaknesses of the project and the bottlenecks it faces are removed. The following are a brief list of pertinent issues the Committee may wish to consider and provide guidelines upon. Constraints internal to the project are:

- (a) Insufficient follow-up on technical assistance provided to national and institutional participating centre;
- (b) Insufficient efforts in delivery of training; follow-up training programmes; increased cost-effectiveness in the delivery of training; and, mechanisms to gauge retention of skills and know-how and the utilization of such skills;
- (c) Inadequate levels of integration amongst project activities, i.e. between advisory services, training, development of methodologies, user services, etc.

(d) Central to all of the above is the limited size of personnel resources available to the project.

54. The following assume significance amongst constraints external to the project:

(a) Low levels of participation by designated national and institutional participating centres; the degree of financial and political commitment of their parent institutions; and, delays encountered between the time centres are designated and operational activities take effect;

(b) Slow rate of progress in the development of information infrastructure in member States and awareness of the importance of information in development pursuits;

(c) Insufficient co-ordination between information projects being funded at the national and regional levels by the few major donors to information activities;

(d) Inadequate levels of financial support to the project vis-à-vis the extent of the responsibilities assigned to it;

(e) Concerns regarding the long-term sustainability of the project in all quarters including within the project itself, the UN Secretariat and ECA and amongst donor agencies. Sustainability has implications for organizational status; sources of funding; long-term programme development; staff retention and career development; as well as the confidence of participating institutions.



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Fourth Meeting of the
Regional Technical Committee
for PADIS

Addis Ababa
23-25 March 1989

Item 5 of the Provisional Agenda

REPORT ON A SURVEY OF USER NEEDS

1. In order to better understand the needs of its users, including African researchers on development, planners and decision makers, in 1988 PADIS undertook a study of socio-economic development information use patterns of government planners and decision makers in three Anglophone African countries. The study was based on field work, through a structured and personally administered questionnaire directed at government planners, decision makers and researchers working in the public service of member States; the field work was undertaken in Ethiopia, Nigeria and Zimbabwe. The study was conducted for PADIS by a consultant, Prof. W. O. Aiyepoku of the Department of Information Science, University of Ibadan.

2. The research was also linked to the "Study to Update the Organizational Status, Structure and Delivery Mechanisms of PADIS in the Light of New Techno-Economic Realities," mandated by the Third Meeting of the Regional Technical Committee for PADIS (Addis Ababa, 1987). The study of user needs coincided with the following essential reasons defined by the Regional Technical Committee for the latter study:

(a) the rapidly changing needs of member States for information and data, in view of development challenges faced by the Region;

(b) the need to verify how outputs, products and services delivered by PADIS meet the needs of end users;

(c) aspects of the implementation of the PADIS programme at the national level required problem-solving action, particularly in relation to the participation of member States.

3. It is felt that the present study laid the essential ground for one item of the terms of reference set out for the "Study to Update. . .", viz.

"Determination of the appropriateness of PADIS products and services in meeting the actual and perceived priority needs of end users."

4. The results from the user needs study were to be utilized to improve PADIS' information services, based on a better understanding of information use habits of PADIS' primary users.

Nature of the study and its respondents

5. The study was based on a lengthy questionnaire, pre-tested in Nigeria, and administered directly to every respondent (numbering more than 100); some of the respondents completed the questionnaires after the interviews; the total number of completed questionnaires was 104. As noted, those interviewed were public sector decision makers, planners and researchers in ECA member States; the study was marked by a particularly strong participation of high-level decision makers, particularly at the level of vice-minister or permanent secretary. Twelve percent of the respondents were at this level. Regarding the education and experience of respondents, more than 80 percent has first university degrees or higher; 24 percent held doctorates; the respondents averaged 16 years in the public service of their countries.

6. Ninety percent of those surveyed said their institutions were "involved in the development process." A rather startling point is that the remaining 10 percent, largely those from libraries, archives and documentation/information centres, regarded their institutions as definitely not involved in the development process.

Information in stages of development planning

7. It was found that users needed information support at all stages of the development planning process, but most particularly at the planning stage. Forty-three percent said that maximum information support was required at this stage; additionally, 42 percent said the same support was needed at the stage of "idea formation or rejection" of a plan. Thus, it was concluded that it is essential to deliver appropriate and timely information to development planners and decision makers before planning instruments are developed.

Preferred information formats

8. Information professionals have long held the view that the package in which information is "wrapped" for a particular target group or individual has a significant bearing on the use of that information. Somewhat surprisingly, given the heavy work load of most of the respondents involved in the study, 60 percent said that they preferred to receive full-length original documents; 22 percent preferred reviews of original documents while 16 percent would like summaries or abstracts.

Information habits

9. When in need of development information, the vast majority of respondents (94 percent) said that they consulted subject specialists within or outside their ministries; they also said that they would rather search libraries themselves than ask research assistants to do so or seek the help of librarians. The high ratings given to subject specialists and conversely the low ratings received by librarians as sources of information for public civil servants were striking; however, they corroborate findings of an earlier study done in Nigeria. It has serious implications, however, for the relevance of the information profession in Africa vis-à-vis the provision of development information.

Use of PADIS products and services

10. The sample of respondents was drawn up independently of PADIS contacts or focal points in countries; thus, there was no special effort made to contact those who were known to have used PADIS services. However, the number of those interviewed who had used PADIS products and services was small. Only six and two percent respectively had used Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI) and Question and Answer services; this is not too surprising given that these services had only begun in 1987, and that the respondents were drawn at large from the region. Nine, twenty-nine and 15 percent, respectively, had used DEVINDEX-Africa; the ECA Statistical Yearbook and the Directory of African Experts. However, much of the non-use was based on the fact that respondents did not know of the products; had they known, there was an indication that they would use the products. Thus, the task at hand may be one of more intensive information marketing, including more publicity for the products and services and better targeting of distribution lists.

Use of Information in National Development Plans

11. Many of the respondents information needs came in the context of working on national development plans; 86.4 percent of respondents reported having been involved in the preparation of their national development plans. In doing so, their sources of information were largely: department or unit libraries (82 percent); national statistical offices (78 percent); university libraries (48 percent); and national archives (23 percent). Thirteen percent had used PADIS resources in the national planning exercise. These figures indicate that if PADIS wants to increase its utilization by development planners, it should direct its

products to the three highest rated institutions noted above; information professionals in those offices should receive the PADIS newsletter as well as other printed outputs and be aware of the services and products PADIS offers.

Factors Enhancing Use of Development Information

12. Respondents indicated that "timeliness" was the most important factor to them in the utilization of information.

Constraints in the Use of Development Information

13. Some rather surprising findings arose from this section of the study. Decisions and planners were not put off by long documents, too many information sources or technical information. Apparently, they wanted many full documents written in technical language; thus the arguments for repackaging of development information fell on deaf ears when directed to development planners and decision makers. The factors of importance to them were to have information professionals better trained with regard to development information; to have improved and timely access to documents. More than two-thirds found that information professionals did not adequately serve their needs for development information. These responses point to important areas for possible PADIS action and intervention.

PADIS objectives vis-à-vis user needs

14. Respondents were asked to indicate their accord with PADIS objectives as outlined in the "What is PADIS" brochure (these are listed in the Annex to this paper). More than seventy percent agreed with the importance of all the objectives, except the last one. Only a little more than half felt it was important to "Promote the improvement of information infrastructures in African member States in order to strengthen bibliographic control of national development information output." However, since fewer than twenty percent of the respondents were information professionals, the reason for the relatively low rating of this objective may have had to do with the rather technical wording used.

Information Professionals and Development Planning

15. The study revealed some rather striking findings about information professionals and development planning. According to the consultant who conducted the study, "librarians and archivists displayed an embarrassing lack of understanding, or even awareness, of the basic elements of the development process."

Conclusions

16. This study leads to a number of conclusions and possible recommendations for further action by PADIS. In attempting to learn as much as possible about its user needs, with a view to improving the quality of information services provided to them, PADIS found out that its users had a clear need for relevant and timely information, regardless of technical content, length or quantity. This particularly enforces the need for PADIS to investigate new technologies for transmission of information, such as those that would permit on-line access to its data bases as well as rapid transmission of full texts or reviews, the preferred formats described by the users studied in this sample. This is very much in line for one of the reasons outlined for the "Study on Update. . .": "the means and technologies for information processing and transfer are changing equally rapidly as a result of which new technologies offer solutions that could not have been taken into account at the time PADIS was designed," as well as for one item of its terms of reference: "Study of choice and use of new technologies: hardware, software, telecommunications, etc."

17. The study also calls for a review of PADIS bibliographic products and services. It is recommended that they be better directed as a service to information professionals who must in turn be sensitized to bring them to the attention of planners and decision makers. This should be done in the context of the promotion of a vigorous marketing for PADIS, in particular the development of a more precise targeting for its products and services. In the case of future information products and services, market research should precede their introduction.

18. The lack of awareness on the part of information professionals of the vast field of development brings out the need for sensitization and training of Africans in the information field to the importance as well as the essentials of development planning and development economics. This could be done in the context of training information professionals at African schools of library and information science; it could also be introduced as an element in the curriculum of in-service training which PADIS delivers to information professionals in its national and institutional participating centre.

19. On the whole, the present study reinforces the need for further studies on the topic of user needs. Obviously, since this study was done in three English-speaking countries, it needs to be replicated in Arabic, French and Portuguese speaking countries of

the region. In this context, a standardized methodology for the undertaking of development user needs studies should be evolved. It also needs to be extended more from the user need aspect to the question of PADIS' adaptation to these needs.

20. More specifically, PADIS needs to follow-up its connection with the more than 100 users contacted in this study. All of them are among the users PADIS wants to reach. They have been already added to the PADIS mailing list to receive the PADIS newsletter as well as other printed outputs and invited to subscribe to the Selective Dissemination of Information Service (SDI); regular and individualized contact should be maintained to ensure that they become informed users of the PADIS system who will spread information about its utility to other potential users.

**OBJECTIVES OF THE
PAN AFRICAN DOCUMENTATION AND INFORMATION SYSTEM ***

The overall objective of PADIS is to establish a regional information system in Africa which will serve as a conduit for information and data for development, centered around national, subregional and regional networks to which all members will voluntarily contribute information and share their information management experiences.

The immediate objectives of the PADIS programme are the following:

- To assist African states in strengthening their national capacities for collection, storage and utilization of data on development through advisory services, training and user services;
- To promote the exchange of information for development among African member States;
- To establish a system which will improve access to both published and unpublished documents produced in Africa on questions relating to economic, social, scientific and technological aspects of development;
- To promote the creation of statistical and other numerical data banks on fields of importance to development in the region;
- To train information specialists at national, subregional and regional levels in order to upgrade skills and introduce modern methods of information handling;
- To promote the utilization of common methodologies for information handling in the Region and ensure compatibility with international information systems;
- To promote the improvement of information infrastructure in African member States in order to strengthen bibliographic control of national development information output.

* As stated in the brochure "What is PADIS" (Addis Ababa, 1987).



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Item 6 of the provisional agenda

**REPORT OF THE SECOND MEETING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE
ON HARMONIZATION AND STANDARDIZATION OF
DOCUMENTATION AND INFORMATION SYSTEMS
AT ECA-SPONSORED
REGIONAL AND SUBREGIONAL INSTITUTIONS**

PART I

ORGANIZATION OF THE MEETING

Introduction

1. The Second Meeting of the Standing Committee on Harmonization and Standardization of Documentation and Information Systems at ECA Sponsored Regional and Subregional Institutions was convened by PADIS from 15 to 17 March at the UNECA Headquarters in Addis Ababa.
2. The present report contains an account of the meeting.

Attendance

3. The members of the following ECA-Sponsored Regional and Subregional Institutions and other agencies attended the meeting: African Development Bank (ADB), African Regional Centre for Technology (ARCT), African Regional Organization for Standardization (ARSO), Council for the Development of Economic and Social Research in Africa (CODESRIA), Eastern and Southern African Universities Research Programme (ESAURP), Economic Community for West African States (ECOWAS), and International Livestock Centre for Africa (ILCA).
4. The International Trade Centre/Preferential Trade Area (ITC/PTA) attended as observer.

Opening of the meeting

5. The Director of PADIS, Mr. D.E. Benzine, opened the meeting on behalf of the Deputy Executive Secretary Mr. Tchouta Moussa. After recalling the decision of the Seventh Meeting of the Conference of the Chief Executives of ECA-Sponsored Institutions to establish the Standing Committee on Harmonization and Standardization of Documentation and Information systems of these institutions, and the decision of the Eighth Meeting of the same Conference to extend the membership of this Committee to all African institutions interested in the subject, he stated that the main purpose of this Meeting was to discuss the major constraints in establishing the system and extending the network and develop modalities to overcome these. The meeting would also be a forum for exchange of experiences among the members.

Election of Officers (Agenda item 2)

6. The following officers were elected:

Chairperson: ECA/PADIS
Vice Chairperson: ARCT
Rapporteur: ARSO

Adoption of the Agenda (Agenda item 3)

7. The proposed agenda was adopted.

PART II

SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS

Matters arising from the First Meeting of the Standing Committee and the Eighth Meeting of Chief Executives of ECA-Sponsored Regional and Subregional Institutions (Agenda item 4)

8. The Secretariat informed the Committee of the follow-up activities taken by PADIS in implementing the recommendations and decisions of the First Meeting of the Standing Committee. He expressed confidence that the decision to expand the Standing Committee membership to include other non-ECA sponsored institutions would stimulate and encourage greater participation. Noting the catalytic role that PADIS could play in promoting co-operation among regional and subregional institutions, he urged the Standing Committee to take stock of existing major problems and come up with a general orientation which could be translated into specific programme actions. In this regard the Standing Committee was invited to consider the proposal for merging bibliographic data bases on development literature of various institutions.

9. In the discussion that followed it was emphasized that it was necessary to know as accurately as possible the level of computerization of each institution to take appropriate actions for co-ordinating and harmonizing activities undertaken by each institution. It was pointed out that the data available from a previous study was very sketchy due to a very low response rate. It was stated that it is planned to update the survey by sending out new questionnaires. The Standing Committee supported the proposal put forward by PADIS to merge a number of bibliographic databases of ECA-Sponsored Institutions and other agencies. It was

felt however that such an attempt could only be made after compatibility issues were resolved.

Draft Agreement between PADIS and Institutional Participating Centres

10. It was emphasized that institutions planning to participate in the PADIS network should sign the agreement as adopted by the Conference of Chief Executives of ECA-sponsored Regional and Subregional Institutions. After a lengthy discussion, in which differing views were expressed in respect to the format of "the agreement of participation" the representatives agreed to follow up with their Chief Executives regarding the signature of the agreement.

Report of the Sub-committee on norms and standards (Agenda item 5)

11. In connection with the meeting of the Sub-committee on norms and standards, a member of the Sub-committee underlined the main recommendations of the Meeting as follows:

- (a) distribution to all Standing Committee members of the revised PADIS Bibliographic Record Preparation manual;
- (b) elaboration of an institution authority file and an institution identification code;
- (c) elaboration of codes to categorize academic qualifications and degrees;

12. In addition it was indicated that many of the recommendations adopted at the ARCT/IDRC sponsored meeting on harmonization of standards and methodologies for inventories of research, at which PADIS, ARSO and ARCT participated, were retained. These recommendations could be summarized as follows:

- (a) PADIS should co-ordinate inventory preparation activities of institutions in the region;
- (b) ARCT and CODESRIA with the co-operation of PADIS, should examine and evaluate existing questionnaires and manuals used for developing research inventories with a view to developing methodology handbooks and training manuals;
- (c) the ISO 2709 data exchange format should be adopted for information exchange;

(d) PADIS should take the lead in the marketing of information products produced by regional and subregional institutions;

(e) Training in the preparation of directories together with techniques of desktop publishing should be organized;

13. In the discussion that followed the question was raised regarding the basis on which the sub-committee has been selected and also whether it was in a position to develop norms and standards for the network. It was explained that the Sub-committee, which had only an advisory role has been selected from members which attended the first meeting and which were actively involved in the field of information. Its mandate was to review existing PADIS tools and make recommendation for improving the applicability of the norms within the network. The Standing Committee recommended that PADIS explore the compatibility problems, if any, for the merging of various ECA-Sponsored Institutions and other agencies bibliographic data bases

Progress report on the implementation of the PADIS Programme During 1987-89 (Agenda item 6)

14. The Secretariat presented a progress report on PADIS. Reference was made to PADIS technical assistance activities including training, advisory services to member States and African Intergovernmental Organizations (IGOs), and technical cooperation activities. Details of progress made in networking, database development, user services in the preparation of tools and methodologies, and promotional activities were also described. The Secretariat gave an outline of meetings and technical consultative seminars organized during the period under review. It was indicated that the publications produced by PADIS were available upon request. Information was provided in respect of production of outputs, attainment of project objectives, and the impact the PADIS project had during the period under review.

Reports by representatives of institutions on development and activities in the fields of information systems (Agenda item 7)

15. The experiences of the Standing Committee members were presented by representatives from: ADB, ARCT, ARSO, ESAURP, ECOWAS, ILCA, and ITC/PTA.

16. ADB - The Bank's library/documentation centre which is being computerized with the assistance of the Government of France using the IBISCUS system and TEXTO software was described. The Committee was informed that within ADB there were information units dealing

with record management and Bank management systems. The representatives indicated that the focal point for PADIS would be the Library/Documentation Centre. They also requested PADIS assistance in the area of microfiching.

17. ARCT - The representative presented his paper "Activities of the ARCT in industrial and technological information, 1988". He gave an overview of the centre, its personnel, activities, equipment, products and services. He described ARCT's information system (ARCTIS) and provided details on the various databases produced and maintained by ARCT including ongoing activities for the elaboration of a directory of directories. He announced that an invitation will be extended to the Standing Committee members to attend a workshop on computerized information handling, scheduled before the end of 1989.

18. ARSO - The representative highlighted the major activities, products and services of ARSO's network (ARSO-DISNET). He described the planned activities for the year 1989-90, which includes training in the use of CDS/ISIS software, the organization of two seminars for anglophone and francophone countries on management of information systems on standards and the provision of fellowships to ARSO network members.

19. CODESRIA - The representative began by describing CODESRIA, its activities and objectives. She described the International Development Information Network (IDIN) in which CODESRIA is a member and she presented the IDIN Manual and the Draft manual for Institutes, Research Projects and Specialists. It was explained that CODESRIA has produced a number of directories using Micro CDS/ISIS: Directory of Research Projects, Roster of Social Scientists, Directory of Training and Research Institutes, Index of African Social Science Periodical Articles. She circulated a number of publications that were produced by CODESRIA: African Development Newsletter and Books and indicated her willingness to undertake joint activities with other institutions in areas of common interest.

20. ECOWAS - The representative gave an overview of the ECOWAS library, which has only one professional and one junior staff. She indicated that the library gets most of its documents from international and United Nations organizations and revealed that it had just acquired WANG computers. Having stressed the role ECOWAS played in the West African region the representative argued that institutions such as UNECA could be better served if some kind of support was provided to enable it develop a network among its member States. It was also mentioned that assistance was required in the areas of training, equipment and finance.

21. ESAURP - The Committee informed that ESAURP has only just begun to take steps towards the establishment of a database on research in progress, following the PADIS/ESAURP joint project in this area. It was indicated that ESAURP had acquired an IBM PC/XT and that more are expected in the near future.

22. ILCA - The representative began by describing ILCA and particularly its activities in the field of information and documentation. He reported that ILCA's database contained some 55,000 records supported on MINISIS software; CDS/ISIS was used in field offices. The various products and services of ILCA's documentation centre were also described.

23. ITC/PTA - The observer from ITC/PTA informed the meeting that PTA has established a trade information centre with the assistance of ITC. He gave information on the various databases which are being developed at the PTA: traders (exporter/importer) data file; trade statistics; trade rules, regulations and documents; trade control measures; tenders, tariffs and cost of different transport corridors; prices and market information; joint ventures, on bibliography. He referred to a project proposal being prepared for submission to the EEC with a view to connect the PTA trade information network to the Chambers of Commerce of PTA member States. He outlined the role of the national focal points serve as reporters.

Recommendations

After discussing relevant issues raised during the presentations, the Standing Committee made the following recommendations: (a) PADIS should explore the possibility of compiling a directory of databases and information systems of ECA-Sponsored institutions and other agencies and (b) PADIS should prepare an inventory of all telecommunications links presently operational connecting on line African institutions to access external information sources.

Review of specific items of the system (Agenda item 8)

24. Review of proposed institution code - The Standing Committee had before it a secretariat paper (ECA/PADIS/SCH/II/5a) which outlined the purpose, definition and proposed format for the representation of names of PADIS institutional participating centres. The Standing Committee was informed that institutions planning to participate in the PADIS network should sign the agreement of participation.

25. Review of the revised worksheet and manual - The revised PADIS manual for bibliographic record preparation was submitted to the participants for comment. The secretariat indicated that final

editing and review remained to be completed and expressed the hope that the manual would be translated into French and distributed before the end of 1989. A Committee member expressing his satisfaction at the useful work accomplished in revising the manual observed that this should have been done years ago. He further asked PADIS to circulate the working documents well in advance of the scheduled meeting to allow members of the Committee to effectively participate in the debate.

26. Review of the PADIS experience in the use of CDS/ISIS software - The Secretariat introduced a document entitled "PADIS manual for document analysis - Micro-ISIS version" (ECA/PADIS/SCH/II/5d) and conducted a brief demonstration of the CDS/ISIS version I software. Oral presentation was also made by the representative of ARCT on the various CDS/ISIS generated outputs.

27. Review of the PADIS institution authority file - The Standing Committee had before it a paper (ECA/PADIS/SCH/II/5d) outlining the details of the PADIS institution authority file designed to promote information exchange by maintaining consistency within the network. The secretariat explained the procedure for maintaining the authority file and introduced a sample worksheet which could be used by institutions planning to create their own file. The Standing Committee recommended that the institution authority list be made available on diskettes for wide dissemination.

Training requirements and schedules for 1989/1990 (Agenda item 8)

28. The secretariat presented a paper entitled "Training requirements and schedules for 1989/90" to the meeting. It was stated that most of the training courses, seminars and workshops planned by PADIS were geared mainly toward national and institutional centres in PADIS system. For the ECA-Sponsored Regional and Sub-regional Institutions, the training to be planned should be training that would ensure the use of compatible information classification and processing norms, as well as standards and tools in order to maintain compatibility and facilitate exchange of information among the institutions involved. The secretariat requested participants to forward to PADIS the planned 1990 training programmes in their institutions so that co-ordination of training between the institutions and PADIS could be effected.

29. The meeting also requested PADIS to send to their institutions PADIS planned training programmes well in advance, so that their institutions might include some of these programmes in their work programme. The PADIS training programmes should also be

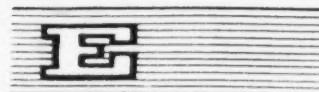
announced in the PADIS Newsletter. In the discussion that followed some participants wanted to know if PADIS could sponsor the participation of people from intergovernmental organizations like ECOWAS and non-governmental organizations like CODESRIA, to PADIS training programmes, and also if PADIS could sponsor resource persons to their training programmes. In answer to this the secretariat stated that support being given to institutions in Africa by PADIS was normally in the context of the development of the PADIS system and network. This meant that if any intergovernmental institution is officially designated as a PADIS institutional participating centre, then PADIS assistance, with funds permitting, could be extended to such an institution. Representatives of ADB suggested to PADIS the possibilities of co-operating in training programmes. They requested PADIS to start a dialogue with the ADB training centre, so that the ADB training centre might consider including information training component in its training programmes. They then suggested to PADIS to discuss with ADB training Centre, the possibility of organizing an "Information management workshop for development institutions" to take place in 1990, where the PADIS network could be discussed. The secretariat took note of this suggestion.

Any other business (Agenda item 9)

30. The Standing Committee recommended that efforts be made to make all working documents available in both French and English.



UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL



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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

Fourth Meeting of the
Regional Technical Committee
for PADIS

Addis Ababa
23-25 March 1989
Item 7 of the provisional agenda

PADIS
WORK PROGRAMME AND BUDGET 1990-1991

I. United Nations biennial Programme and Budget

1. Every two years each subprogramme/programme at ECA draws up its work programme and budget for the forthcoming biennium. PADIS has just completed the drafting of its work programme and budget for 1990-1991, which is then sent through appropriate channels to the United Nations General Assembly for approval. However, as the intergovernmental body directly concerned with the activities of PADIS, the Regional Technical Committee is mandated to comment upon the work programme; its comments are then forwarded to the General Assembly, the final approval body. The work programme which has just been prepared includes a number of departures from previous versions. These will be described below and the narrative of the draft programme presented in full.

2. At ECA the Pan-African Documentation and Information System (PADIS) is responsible for three subprogrammes under two major programmes. The first, subprogramme 2 (Electronic data processing services) under Administration and Common Services, represents its electronic data processing services to the ECA Secretariat. The latter two, subprogrammes 7 and 8 (Central co-ordination and information exchange services and national and subregional information and documentation services, respectively) cover its information service activities directly on behalf of member States.

3. In preparing its proposed work programme for the forthcoming biennium, PADIS had attempted to merge the subprogrammes from separate programmes (Administration and common services, Development issues and policies in Africa), for reasons for management efficiency. This initiative was rejected by the Office of Programme Planning at United Nations Headquarters; thus the structure described in paragraph 2 *supra* remains. However, a programme element (2.1) has been introduced under subprogramme 7 which includes PADIS' management of EDP services for the ECA secretariat.

4. The presentation in this document will focus on the area of major interest to the Committee, PADIS' activities on behalf of member States, including both substantive (i.e. those activities financed by the United Nations regular budget) and operational activities (those financed from extra-budgetary sources). The format of the United Nations programme budget includes only a brief citation of operational activities, which comprise the bulk of PADIS' efforts. These will be detailed below, according to the source of extra-budgetary funds.

Subprogrammes 7 and 8, Development Issues and Policies in Africa

5. Subprogrammes 7 and 8 first appeared in the regular work programme of the United Nations with the ECA work programme of 1986-1987. The subprogrammes were present in the 1988-1989 work

programme as well. However, in both these previous work programmes, all of the resources shown for these subprogrammes were extra-budgetary. In 1990-1991, in line with the recommendation of the Regional Technical Committee (its draft resolution on the subject which became resolution 600 (XIX) of the ECA), regular budget resources for both the personnel as well as the activities of these subprogrammes are being requested.

6. Activities under subprogramme 7 are directed toward improving the flow of development information, especially in respect of the implementation of the United Nations Programme for African Economic Recovery and Development, as well as to better the situation of African countries in the management of information as a resource for development. Subprogramme 8 activities are directed towards increasing the exchange of development information among African member States, with particular respect to the utilization of information technology in the region.

Subprogramme 7: Central co-ordination and information exchange services

12. The programme elements under programme 7 have been re-organized in the 1990-1991 work programme submission. In the past there had been no way, given the structuring of the work programme, to reflect the work months devoted by the Director of PADIS to the management of the EDP function at ECA. Additionally, since the establishment of PADIS the post of the Director has been financed from extra-budgetary funds. In this submission, in line with the recommendations of extra-budgetary donors, as well as the Reports made by the United Nations Board of Auditors and Mr. Gurunlian (copies of which are available to members of the Committee upon request), a request has been made to establish the post of the Director. This is reflected in programme element 7.1.

7. The narrative of this programme element in the proposed 1990-1991 work programme and budget is as follows:

Programme element: 7.1 Overall co-ordination and management of PADIS information systems and user services

1. Intermediate activity in forthcoming biennium:

(i) Co-ordination and management of development and utilization of Pan African Documentation and Information System data bases (Devel. issues and policies in Africa, programme element 7.2);

(ii) Co-ordination and management of network of national, subregional and institutional participating

centres (Devel. issues and policies in Africa, subprogramme 8, programme element 8.1);

(iii) Co-ordination and management of Electronic word and data processing services at ECA (Adm. and common services subprogramme 2, programme elements 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3);

(iv) Preparation of work programme and budget, programme performance reports, medium-term plan and related activities for Administration and common services subprogramme 2, Development issues and policies in Africa subprogrammes 7 and 8;

(v) Participation in annual meeting of the Board of the Advisory Committee for the Co-ordination of Information Systems (ACCIS).

8. Programme element 7.2 incorporates the activities on behalf of the development and promotion of utilization of the PADIS system of bibliographic, statistical and referral data bases. The establishment of a regular budget post, at the P-3 level, is being requested in connection with these activities; the post is that of the Chief of the Computerized Documentation Section. The major duties would be to create, maintain and update PADIS referral and bibliographic data bases of development information, take responsibility for the development and maintenance of PADIS methodology, ensure delivery of PADIS printed outputs, including Directories of African Experts, Research and Development Institutions, Development Projects and to participate in the development of the PADIS network. The activities connected with the programme element would continue to be financed from extra-budgetary sources.

9. The narrative of this programme element in the proposed 1990-1991 work programme and budget is as follows:

Programme element: 7.2 Development and utilization of Pan African Documentation and Information System data bases

1. Final output/service (or, if neither, intermediate activity) in forthcoming biennium:

(i) Technical publication: DEVINDEX-AFRICA, 3 current awareness bulletins yearly and one cumulative index: (bulletins, first, second and third quarters, 1990; first, second and third quarters, 1991; cumulative index, second quarter 1991);

(ii) Technical publication: PADIS newsletter (four issues annually); (one issue each quarter, first through fourth quarters, 1990-1991);

(iii) Technical publication: Directory of African Experts (fourth quarter, 1991);

(iv) Ad hoc information services: Selective Dissemination of Information Bulletin (two issues annually, second and fourth quarters, 1990 and 1991);

Operational activity (XB): Continuing technical co-operation project on the Pan African Documentation and Information System (PADIS), Phase III (1990,1991).

Subprogramme 8: National and subregional information and documentation services

10. As in the previous two biennial work programmes, subprogramme 8 has one programme element: network of national, subregional and institutional participating centres. The activities as well as the personnel for this programme element will continue to be provided from extra-budgetary sources.

11. The narrative of this programme element in the proposed 1990-1991 work programme and budget is as follows:

Programme element: 8.1 Network of national, subregional and institutional participating centres

1. Final output/service (or, if neither, intermediate activity) in forthcoming biennium:

(i) Substantive servicing of a meeting of Regional Technical Committee for PADIS (second quarter, 1991);

(ii) Substantive servicing of meetings of Subregional Technical Committees for PADIS (one meeting, first quarter 1990; two meetings, first quarter 1991);

(iii) Substantive servicing of a meeting of Information Science Committee of Joint Conference of African Statisticians, Planners and Demographers; (second quarter, 1990);

(iv) Report to meeting of Regional Technical Committee for PADIS on adaptation of PADIS to changing needs (second quarter, 1991);

(v) Report to Subregional Technical Committees for PADIS on implementation of PADIS in their respective subregions (one, first quarter, 1990; two, first quarter, 1991);

(vi) Report to Joint Conference of African Statisticians, Planners and Demographers on use of microcomputers in documentation and information work in Africa (second quarter, 1990).

Operational activity: Continuing technical co-operation project on the Pan African Documentation and Information System (PADIS), Phase III (1990, 1991).

Intermediate activity:

Substantive servicing of annual meeting of Standing Committee on the Harmonization and Standardization of Documentation and Information Systems at ECA-sponsored Regional and Subregional Institutions (SCOHSDIS) (second quarter, 1990; second quarter, 1991);

12. For the first time since its establishment PADIS has requested funds from the United Nations regular budget for its information systems activities on behalf of member States. It is expected, in this period of United Nations financial crisis and zero-growth budget, that opposition to the approval of these requests may arise, first in the Fifth Committee (Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budget Questions [ABACQ]) and possibly in the General Assembly itself. In this regard, the support of members of the Regional Technical Committee in contacting their delegations to the United Nations in New York to request their support of the PADIS subprogrammes in the 1990-1991 work programme and budget would be very helpful.

II. Operational activities

13. In addition to the substantive activities PADIS will deliver through the United Nations Programme and Budget, PADIS will undertake a series of technical co-operation activities on behalf of ECA member States in the field of development information systems financed from extra-budgetary sources of funding. For the period 1990-1991 these involve three projects funded by the United Nations Development Programme and one funded by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). These are as follows:

I. United Nations Development Programme

A. Regional Bureau for Africa (RBA)

1. Pan African Documentation and Information System, Phase III (RAF/86/053) (Funding for the period 1990-1991: US\$866,200).
2. Developing a data bank and information service for the Organization for the Management and Development of the Kagera River Basin (RAF/88/125) (Funding for the period 1990-1991: US\$132,500).

B. Regional Bureau for Arab States and European Programmes (RBASEP):

Participation of North African Countries in the Pan African Documentation and Information System (RAB/88/012) (Funding for the period 1990-1991: US\$185,500).

II. Union of Soviet Socialist Republics:

Seminar and study tour on the management of national scientific, technological and socio-economic information systems and networks (Funding for the period 1990-1991: 120,000 Roubles and US\$20,000).

14. Details on the work programmes for each of these projects follows.

Pan African Documentation and Information System, Phase III (RAF/86/063)

15. Under the UNDP/RBA funded project Pan African Documentation and Information System, Phase III (RAF/86/053), the following activities, in conjunction with stated outputs, are foreseen for 1990-1991.

Advisory services on assessment of needs, formulation of information policies and plans, design of national/sectoral systems; choice of information technologies, identification of lead institutions, establishment of subregional centres (10 missions/year);

Training workshops in (1) PADIS methodologies of information systems operations (3/year); (2) computerized documentation techniques (one/year); (3) policy and managerial aspects of information systems (one/year) (4) statistical data base development and utilization (two regional workshops);

Installation of data bases (bibliographic, referral and statistical) and software at national and subregional participating centres;

Fellowships, study tours and familiarization missions for staff of national and subregional centres (two/year);

Maintenance and development of data bases: (PAD-DEV bibliographic, PADIS-STAT statistical data base, African experts, African institutions, African research and development projects;

Publication of (1) user manuals for bibliographic, referral and statistical data bases (2) of the PADIS newsletter (quarterly in English and French);

Technical publications derived from data bases, including DEVINDEX-Africa (quarterly, with cumulative index), Directory of African Experts, Directory of African Research and Development Institutions, Directory of African Research and Development Institutions; Thesaurus for Information Processing;

Publication of two bulletins annually in the Selective Dissemination of Information service (SDI);

Operation of a question/answer service;

Income-generating activities (information products/services);

Documents delivery in hardcopy or microfiche.

16. A major constraint in the implementation of this project, which cover PADIS' major activities, is that the budget for 1991 does not cover professional posts. Although the activities are scheduled to continue through to the end of 1991, funding for the five professional-level posts which presently comprise the PADIS staff for operational activities is scheduled to come to an end in 1990. It is hoped that the Committee will use its influence to bring this to the attention of UNDP/RBA in the hope that the posts can be extended to the end of the project cycle, i.e. 31 December 1991 in order for the outputs to be delivered effectively to member States.

Developing a data bank and information service for the Organization for the Management and Development of the Kagera River Basin (RAF/88/125)

17. Under this project (which will begin its activities in 1989) and which are intended to strengthen the documentation centre at the Kagera River Basin Organization, the activities in 1990 and 1991 will concentrate on **training staff** of the Organization and from participating member States in the use of the documentation

and printing equipment which will have been installed in 1989. A United Nations volunteer based at the Organization will work on the **development of a data bank** of numerical data on population, socio-economic, hydrometeorological, agricultural, natural resources, energy and transport statistics related to the Basin area. **Training workshops** will be mounted on the use of automated documentation services and the data bank system. In 1991, the concluding year of the project, PADIS will monitor and evaluate the project, and UNDP will schedule a tripartite review as well as an **evaluation mission** of the project.

Participation of North African Countries in the Pan African Documentation and Information System (RAB/88/012)

18. Under this project, which also will begin its activities in 1989 and which is intended to extend the scope of PADIS Phase III to cover the North Africa subregion, the activities for 1990-1991 will include:

Exchange of data bases (receipt of data bases from national and institutional participating centres and redistribution of merged outputs);

Advisory services on (1) the installation, utilization and development at national centres of the PADIS-STAT data base and (2) information systems design, fact-finding, identification of national focal points and information policy formulation;

Training workshops for personnel from the subregion on (1) the utilization of bibliographic information management software, (2) the utilization, maintenance and operation of the PADIS-STAT statistical data bank, (3) computerized documentation techniques and (4) alternate information management strategies.

Publication of bibliographic indices on development literature - including two national indices and two Arabic supplements to DEVINDEX-AFRICA;

Publication of two bulletins annually in the Selective Dissemination of Information service (SDI);

Publication of study reports on (1) adapting the design of PADIS to the needs of the subregion, and (2) information utilization problems and information marketing strategies;

Publication in Arabic of promotional materials on PADIS, including posters, the PADIS newsletter and the "What is PADIS" brochure;

Documents delivery in hardcopy or microfiche;

Operation of a question/answer service.

Seminar and study tour on the management of national scientific, technological and socio-economic information systems and networks (USSR grant)

19. Scheduled to take place in 1990, the seminar and study tour will take 25 African experts in development information systems to the Soviet Union to participate in a seminar and to view scientific, technological and socio-economic information networks.

Conclusion

20. The Committee is requested to comment upon the above work programme for 1990-1991. Its comments will be forwarded through the Report of this meeting to the Technical Preparatory Committee for the Whole and the Conference of Ministers of Economic Planning and Development. The support of the Committee is solicited in regard to securing approval for the above work programme and budget to be submitted to the United Nations General Assembly as well as in connection with assistance from extra-budgetary donors to continue the technical co-operation activities of PADIS.

Statement

by

Professor Adebayo Adedeji

United Nations Under-Secretary General

and

Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa

at the Opening of the

Fourth Meeting of the Regional Technical Committee for PADIS

23 March 1989

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to Africa Hall for this fourth meeting of the Regional Technical Committee for the Pan African Documentation and Information System.

We are now meeting for the fourth time during the last five years. Our deliberations at previous meetings have ensured that the plans for PADIS reflect the needs of our member States, and that they are implemented accordingly. As with our previous meetings, the present one provides us with some success stories as well as with challenges we are expected to help in resolving.

PADIS is now in the second year of its third phase. The end of 1989 will see ten years of PADIS operations. The System is indeed reaching a watershed. Therefore, this is a most opportune moment to look into PADIS and to examine what it has accomplished over the past few years as this will provide indications of likely trends for the future. This meeting is also timely in that management will have three more years to implement any guidelines and corrective actions the Committee may put forward. To this extent, the task before the present meeting is quite different from previous ones.

As the documentation submitted to you reveals, the past two years were characterized by vigorous efforts to implement the work programme approved by the Committee at its last meeting. The results have been very encouraging. The rate of implementation of planned activities has been close to one hundred percent. The number and variety of the training programmes and technical advisory services executed by the Project are impressive. At long last, the Project's information services are proving to be useful to the work of our planners and researchers, as the number of requests for information received by PADIS confirms.

PADIS has also demonstrated the degree of maturity it has reached by addressing issues that are critical to the development of basic information infrastructures in the region. Specific examples, in this regard, are the two events it organized in the past year: the first, the **Regional Seminar on Information Management Strategies for Africa** held in Tangiers, Kingdom of Morocco, in November 1988; and the second, the **Regional Seminar on National Information and Informatics Policies in Africa** held here in Africa Hall in December 1988. Both events are direct outcomes of the expanded role this Committee prescribed for PADIS at its last meeting.

As much as the full implementation of planned activities is an indicator of achievement, it is not in itself proof of success. It is even more important that the numerous activities add up and

lead to the attainment of the Project's objectives and that they have a visible impact on the manner in which information is managed and utilized in our member States. This, in the final analysis, is the raison d'être of PADIS, and should therefore be given maximum attention by the Committee.

Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,

The mandate given to this Committee by the ECA Conference of Ministers is quite explicit as regards its role in monitoring the financing of PADIS. Compared to other regional machineries, PADIS is still very young. Our concerns about the future of PADIS, therefore, do not arise from the fear that it may outlive the generosity of donor organizations, as might be the case with some intergovernmental institutions. Rather, it emerges from the fact that we desire to see PADIS on a firm financial footing; that it shall start to sustain itself, in part, from income it generates itself; that it is given sufficient time to prove itself useful to our members to such an extent that they put their own resources into it; and, that, in the process, it avoids the financial pitfalls in which so many other African regional machineries find themselves. We are cognizant of the degree of, and the causes for, the apprehension prevailing amongst the donor agencies contributing to PADIS.

It has been a standard position of bilateral, and lately of multilateral donors as well, that institutional support to development projects should cease at the earliest possible stage. In principle, we have always been in perfect agreement with that. But, in addition, and especially in cases like PADIS, we argue that continuing or discontinuing financial support to a project should be based on, first and foremost, the performance of the project; secondly, whether or not there are emerging challenges in the fields covered by the Project concerned that will provide new dimensions to it; thirdly, whether or not there are sufficiently promising alternatives that may lead one to consider shifting resources from one aspect of the project to another; and, lastly, whether the benefits of discontinuing the project outweigh the costs, given the level of investments already made.

Having considered all the above points, I personally vouch for PADIS that it merits continued donor support. What is equally important, though, is the commitment of our Governments and the views of donor agencies, both of whom are adequately represented here.

As for the ECA itself, it is known to you that it has been supporting PADIS in several ways, by providing financial resources as well as technical and administrative back-stopping. In spite of such support, there is a consensus that ECA ought to do more. Apparently, some donors would like to see an increased ECA.

of such support, there is a consensus that ECA ought to do more. Apparently, some donors would like to see an increased ECA budgetary involvement prior to renewing their commitment to PADIS. We trust our actions in this regard speak for themselves. ECA's budget submissions for the period 1990-91, to be presented to the UN General Assembly next fall, contain, for the first time, requests for personnel provisions for PADIS. When approved, these regular budget provisions will mark the beginning of a sustainable PADIS programme. Our intention, however, is not to stop there. Higher levels of resources will be requested under the next UN Medium-Term Plan, 1992-97. We anticipate that the level of resources that will be available then will be much higher than under the present biennial programme.

However, this does not mean that the ECA Secretariat has not faced obstacles in its commitment to PADIS. Recently, PADIS was, unjustifiably, the subject of adverse criticisms in the Fifth Committee of the UN General Assembly. Fortunately, some member States of the African Group made it known that they would defy any attempts to undermine the status of PADIS. The UN Secretariat took a similar position. The Fifth Committee will take up this matter again in the near future when considering the biennial budget I mentioned earlier. It will therefore be the forum where the support of African Governments will make a difference as far as the future of PADIS is concerned. I believe it is the duty of this Committee to bring this state of affairs to the attention of our

member States through the Technical Preparatory Committee of the Whole and the ECA Conference of Ministers. I trust that, upon the advice of this Committee, the Conference of Ministers will help to mobilize the support needed in the Fifth Committee to secure the resources requested for PADIS.

Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,

The present meeting of the Regional Technical Committee has the major task of finding the best ways and means for ensuring the sustainability of PADIS. As I stated earlier, it ought to pursue this from two angles: firstly, by examining the performance of the Project and recommending appropriate guidelines for further improvements; and secondly, by bringing to the attention of our Governments the prevailing state of affairs^s regarding the financial prospects of the Project.

I sincerely believe that if we can accomplish these tasks by the end of our deliberations we will indeed have done a great service to our continent. I am also of the opinion that the composition of the Committee will greatly assist in this. In fact, I wish to congratulate you on the renewal of your mandates for another four-year term, a decision the ECA Conference of Ministers endorsed at its last session.

Once again, I thank you all for coming to Africa Hall to participate in this meeting.

It is with great pleasure that I now declare open the Fourth Meeting of the Regional Technical Committee for PADIS.



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ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

Fourth Meeting of the
Regional Technical Committee
for PADIS

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
23 - 25 March 1989

PROVISIONAL ANNOTATED AGENDA

1. Opening of the meeting
2. Adoption of the Agenda

The meeting will adopt an agenda and programme of work
(Documentation: ECA/PADIS/RTC/IV/1/Rev.2 and
ECA/PADIS/RTC/IV/Inf.2/Rev.1).

3. Matters arising from ECA Meetings

Since the Third Meeting of the Regional Technical Committee for PADIS (RTC) held in Addis Ababa 15-16 April 1987, a number of meetings relevant to the PADIS work programme have been held. These include, among others, the eighth and ninth meetings of the Technical Preparatory Committee of the Whole, the thirteenth and fourteenth meetings of the ECA Conference of Ministers, the Fifth Session of the Joint Conference of African Planners, Statisticians and Demographers, the eighth meeting of Chiefs of ECA-sponsored Regional and Subregional Institutions, and meetings of the legislative organs of the Gisenyi, Lusaka, Niamey, Tangiers and Yaounde-based MULPOCs. The Committee will be informed of the outcome of these meetings. (Documentation: ECA/PADIS/RTC/IV/2 and ECA/PADIS/RTC/IV/2/Add.1).

4. Progress report on PADIS activities since the Third Regional Technical Committee meeting

The Committee will be provided with for its consideration a progress report on the implementation of PADIS since its third meeting. Information will be provided on the status of national

participating centres; subregional centres; institutional participating centres; user services; training; advisory services and infrastructure building at the PADIS Central Coordinating Office (Documentation: ECA/PADIS/RTC/IV/3).

5. Report on a survey of user needs

In 1988 PADIS undertook a survey of needs of users of development information in government offices, research institutions and information centres to find out what kind of development information they needed, in what formats and at which states of the development process. The results of that study are presented to the Committee for its consideration (Documentation: ECA/PADIS/RTC/IV/4).

6. Report of the Second meeting of the Standing Committee on Harmonization and Standardization of Documentation and Information Systems at ECA-sponsored Regional and Subregional institutions

In pursuance of the recommendation made by the Conference of Chief Executives of ECA-sponsored regional and subregional institutions at its seventh meeting in Tripoli, the first meeting of the Standing Committee on the Harmonization and Standardization of Documentation of Information Systems was held at the UNECA headquarters in Addis Ababa on 9-10 February 1988. The meeting discussed its terms of reference and outlined the modalities of cooperation. For its Fourth Meeting the Regional Technical Committee will be provided with the report of the second meeting (15-17 March 1989) of the Standing Committee for its review and appropriate action (Documentation: ECA/PADIS/RTC/IV/5).

7. Padis Work Programme and Budget, 1990-1991

At the end of 1988 PADIS prepared, for approval by the United Nations General Assembly, its work programme and budget for 1990-1991. While that body has the final power of decision over the work programme, the specific comments of the Regional Technical Committee are solicited for forwarding to it. The work programme presented covers both the Electronic Word and Data Processing Services to the ECA Secretariat (Subprogramme 2 of Administration and common services at ECA) as well as its information system activities directed towards member States (which fall under subprogrammes 7 and 8 of Development Issues and Policies in Africa) (Documentation: ECA/PADIS/RTC/IV/6/Rev.1).

8. Any other business

9. Adoption of the report

The meeting will adopt the report it will submit to the tenth meeting of the Technical Preparatory Committee of the Whole and the fifteenth meeting of the ECA Conference of Ministers (Documentation: ECA/PADIS/RTC/IV/7).

10. Closure

The meeting will come to an end on 25 March 1989 upon conclusion of its business.



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ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

Fourth Meeting of the
Regional Technical Committee
for PADIS

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
23-25 March 1989

PROVISIONAL AGENDA

1. Opening of the meeting
2. Adoption of agenda
3. Matters arising from ECA Meetings
4. Progress report on PADIS activities since the Third meeting of the Regional Technical Committee
5. Report on a Survey of User Needs
6. Report of the Second meeting of the Standing Committee on Harmonization and Standardization of Documentation and Information Systems at ECA-sponsored Regional and Subregional Institutions
7. Padis Work Programme and Budget, 1990-1991
8. Any other business
9. Adoption of the report
10. Closure